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Saturday Review World

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Part 1—

The First 50 Years

August 10, 1974

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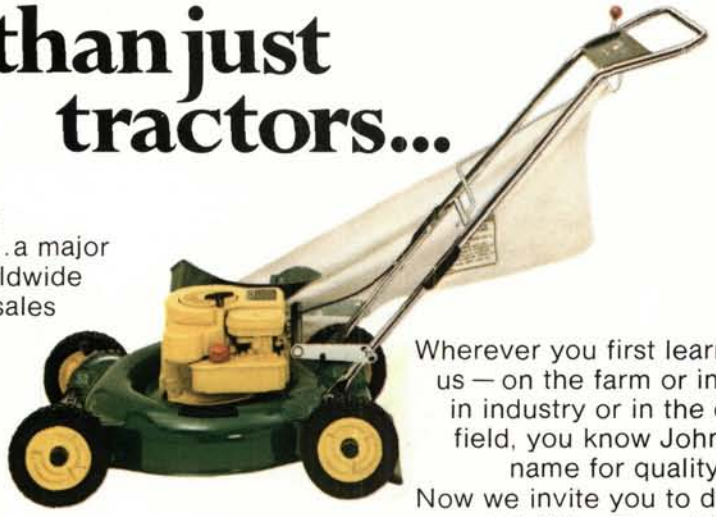

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Roland Gelatt

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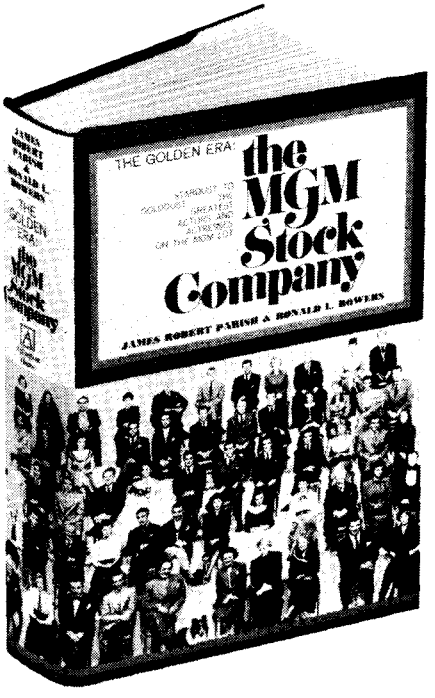

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Musings on a Golden Anniversary

The earliest Greek book of which there is a historical record, Hesiod's *Works and Days,* cried out for a return to the good old days, when life was less complicated and more trusting and when, presumably, one's illusions were intact. This is the way the remote but remembered past tends to appear to the present. Retrospect imparts a quality of innocence to bygone times.

The past sets up far fewer barriers to the understanding of causes and effects than does the present. You assemble your reference materials about the past; there they rest, accessible and obedient, waiting to be sorted out and judged. But the facts of the present won't sit still for a portrait; they are constantly vibrating, full of clutter and confusion.

Today's elusive and complicated facts, however, are apt to be viewed as simplicities a generation hence. And all the current sophistications will probably seem like a species of innocence. What happens, of course, is that people never lose their innocence; they just take on new perspectives. This is where nostalgia begins. It is also what makes the reading of history so engaging and the writing of it so precarious.

The founding editors of *SR* tried to maintain a constancy of attitude toward past and present. They tried to look beyond the events, the manners, and the aberrations that lent themselves all too easily to striking labels and catch phrases —catch phrases that were to become fixed totalities in the minds of later generations. The world of the 1920s that emerged from the pages of *SRL* was not just a world of rumrunners, spangled flappers, jazz, high-flying stocks, Teapot Domes, Gatsbys, Kennicotts, and Babbitts. It was a world which produced scholars and scientists who successfully challenged theories that had held for centuries; a world that was tooling up for great change; a world that was at least as interested in examining values as it was in experimenting with them; a world in which teachers such as Dewey, Kilpatrick, and Rugg were laying down new educational foundations; a world in which poets like A. E. Housman, W. B. Yeats, Robert Frost, Robinson Jeffers, and Edna St. Vincent Millay were finding responsive audiences; a world that relished the intellectual juxtaposition of George Bernard Shaw against H. G. Wells; a world that, for all its vaunted twitching, could sit still long enough to enjoy storytellers like Ellen Glasgow, Edith Wharton, Willa Cather, Thomas Hardy, Joseph Conrad, and E. M. Forster, and still notice new writers like Ernest Hemingway, Sinclair Lewis, and William Faulkner; a world which knew the enjoyment of laughter that men like Robert Benchley and Ring Lardner could provide.

The *Saturday Review,* through its changes in ownership and editorship over a half-century, has never departed from two fixed points in its basic purpose. One has been to avoid becoming a captive of chronology, neither being charmed by the submissiveness of materials dealing with the past nor intimidated by the complexities and loose ends of the present.

The second fixed point has been the resistance to cynicism. Complexities are the natural habitat of cynicism, if only because they set the stage for concealment and manipulation. Especially is this true of complexities that embrace manifest injustice or malevolence or special privilege or corruption or callousness. And the disillusion that is joined to cynicism breeds distrust. This is how societies begin to fall apart. John Middleton Murry, the English critic, in the August 29, 1925, issue of SRL, had this to say of the generation of his countrymen who emerged from the First World War:

> If they had the luck not to die, their brothers had no such luck. From the very beginning, they had to face ultimate questions. The whole civilization which had been taken for granted by their elders was to them an object of suspicion and a cause of despair. . . . They did not become revolutionaries, for revolution seemed to them as futile as war itself. They became nihilists; they touched the bottom of an abyss of despair. . . . It is not easy to create out of despair. . . . They are struggling to create for themselves a philosophy of life by which they may live; they are trying to discover for themselves a justification of their own activity. . . .
>
> The perennial academic question: What is the function of art? has suddenly taken on an almost agonized actuality. . . . So long as this effort at criticism remains purely intellectual, a cynical pessimism is its inevitable conclusion, and the function of the writer is fixed as one of mere amusement. . . . Certain things have to be accepted as beyond the scrutiny of the intellect; chief among them is life itself. The system or the society of which the individual is a member is profoundly mistrusted. The individual cannot trust the system; he must trust himself. So that the critical problem with which modern English literature is trying to grapple is twofold. Is there in the universe at large a general process man may trust? Has he a self he can trust?

What Murry was doing, a quarter of a century before Sartre, Camus, and Tillich, was posing the supreme existentialist questions. His description of the philosophical position of the young English writers following World War I was also prophetically true of the new gen-

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eration of writers in France and Germany following World War II and, in a sense, of the American writers much later in their reaction to the Vietnam war. The significant difference between the Europeans and the Americans, of course, was that the Europeans manifested their opposition through bitterness and withdrawal, whereas the Americans turned to scorn and activism. Common to both, however, was the deep and corrosive distrust of established institutions and even, in a subliminal sense, of life itself.

MIDDLETON MURRY correctly identified the connection between cynicism and cold intellectuality. He didn't feel that a purely intellectual response was adequate to the challenge of life. He never explicitly defined intellectuality, but it must be assumed he was thinking of it in terms of sophisticated indifference or disdain. The intellectuality he criticizes has to be juxtaposed against the positivist attitudes—a belief in the perfectibility of the individual; the notion of an accountable society; confidence in the use of the rational intelligence; faith in the regenerative capacity. Murry felt that the ability to think created the obligation to define purpose: that is, the need to probe for, and constantly refine, the values by which humans add meaning to existence.

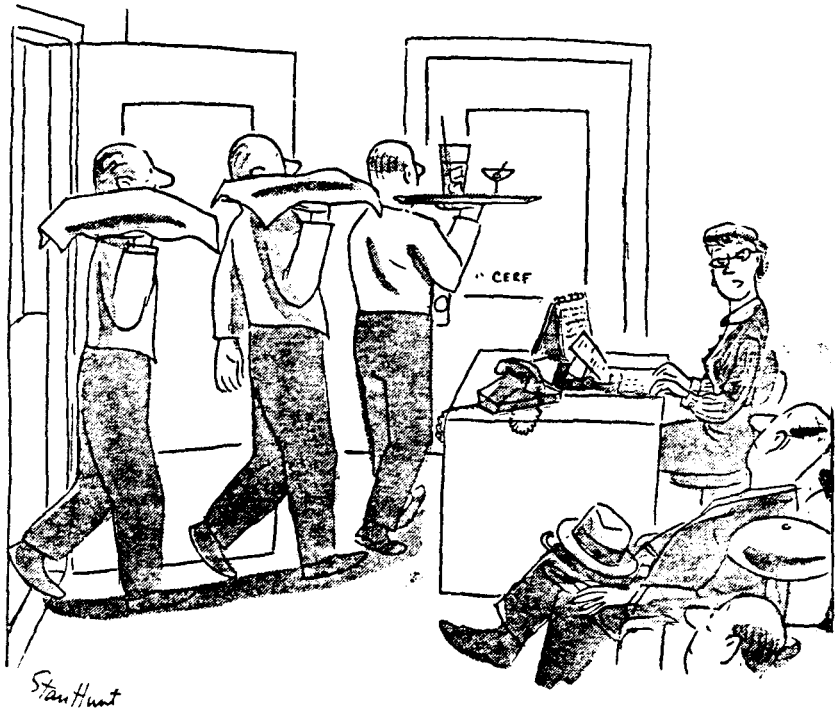
How did it happen that all four editors of *SR* during the half-century existence of the magazine were militantly opposed to cynicism—despite Teapot Domes, breadlines, gas chambers, social and racial injustices, four wars, air bombings, and Watergates? The answer is that they all shared substantially the same values. It is remarkable, now that I think back upon it, that all of us, despite widely different backgrounds and varying views on the place of literature in society, should have come off the same philosophical spool. Our mentors were men like Francis Bacon, Milton, John Stuart Mill, Jefferson, and the American transcendentalists. We were all deeply rooted on native grounds, though we had different centers of attraction. For Henry Canby it was the world of Thoreau, Emerson, and Whitman. For Bernard DeVoto, it was the early explorers of the American West. For George Stevens, it was the perception of America by such writers as John Steinbeck and Willa Cather. For me, it was the kinds of ideas that were ventilated in the Jefferson-Adams correspondence and, much later, in the Holmes-Pollock letters. All these separate interests and enthusiasms converged in giving the magazine continuity of primary character.

Our approach to the editing of the magazine represented perhaps our most striking differences. Henry Canby was less enamored of book reviewing than of criticism. By criticism he meant the conditions of literature, the particular values of a writer and his lines of literary connection, stylistic distinctions and comparative analysis, and, in general, the place of a specific work in the natural history of books. He had no difficulty in accepting Matthew Arnold's statement that the true object of criticism is to bring forward and make known to all readers that which is best both in past and present literature. DeVoto and Stevens put greater emphasis on general reviewing and book coverage than did Canby. They believed the magazine should search out excitement in the literary arena, as when they made front-page news by publishing an account of the "secret" Lawrence papers. My own bias was to connect the world of books to the world of ideas and to provide a well-rounded magazine for people who made no separation between their cultural interests and their world concerns.

DeVoto was perhaps the only one of the four who not only did not shun personal feuds but seemed, indeed, to thrive on them. He had a free-swinging style, and there was no ambiguity in his vocabulary or in his soul. But, like the rest of us, he was energized by a belief in the possibilities of a humane society. All of us saw the connection between progress toward that goal and the full exercise of the unfettered mind. We shied away from debunking and cheap shots. We were not easily pushed around by ideologies or dogma. We avoided intellectual and literary cliques. We had no "crowd" that we were especially eager to please or that counted on us for support. We were more interested in the meeting of minds than in establishing a watering-hole for followers.

Is there a single theme or purpose that emerges from the varied history of the magazine during these past 50 years? I believe there is. That theme or purpose has to do with the conditions of creativity. The editorial page of *SR* from the start has seen creativity as an aspect of human uniqueness that needs special tending. Creativity can be stifled or throttled not just by political juggernauts but also by brutality or wickedness or squalor. It is folly, therefore, to assume that the editor or the writer or the artist has no obligation to the conditions that make creativity possible.

ARGUMENTS over the ivory tower versus the arena are usually a waste of time. They tend to juxtapose Art against Involvement. They assume that creativity never needs its champions, that there is no connection between the shape of the



Stan Hunt
June 16, 1956

"Mr. Cerf doesn't even go out to eat—he just grabs a bite at his desk."

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society and the condition of the arts, and that the world of ideas is somehow separate from the world in which great books are written or great music composed or canvases painted or great drama staged. What is the good society if not the creative society? The conditions of life are inseparable from the conditions of art. The truly creative writer or artist never has to choose between the ivory tower and the arena. He moves freely from one to the other according to his needs and his concerns.

Nothing is more vital for the creative artist than access to the arena. Repressive and insecure societies keep the artist under control not by forbidding him to write or paint but by separating him from his audience. What Solzhenitsyn protested was not that he was forbidden to write but that his writing was not available to his countrymen. And great audiences, as Walt Whitman reminded us, are necessary if we want to have great poets. For it is the audience that ultimately has to uphold the values of the ivory tower.

One of the prime characteristics of a monolithic society is not just that it tries to expunge the free and creative spirit but that it cuts off a free and creative response. When Nikita Khrushchev tried to release the Russian people from the paralyzing effects of Stalinism, one of the first things he did was to permit artists to exhibit works of their own choosing, as apart from those approved by political controllers. Paintings by the thousands came out of cellars. The dominant character of those paintings was not exactly what one might find in a showing of uninhibited abstractionism, but it was remarkably devoid of exhortation or "poster naturalism." What was most significant about that exhibition perhaps was that the audience seemed tentative in attitude, as though the people weren't quite sure it was really safe to see what the artist himself wanted them to see. The habit of selective encounters with art had become so strong that the great audience, in Whitman's phrase, was not ready.

The prime function of the *Saturday Review* over the years, therefore, has been to act as a bridge between artist and audience. Both have their needs; both have their rights. Neither exists in splendid isolation. Yet it has not been an easy time—the Fifties and Sixties especially—for creating a rapport between the two. In the fine arts, we have been passing through a period of estrangement between practitioner and public. The artist properly insists on his right to express himself and to experiment as fully as he wishes. He does not believe he should be asked to explain what he means or to justify his belief that what he has produced deserves to be exhibited. But the art-loving public, even more than the critic, holds the ultimate power. The empty galleries that greeted many of the showings of experimental art during the Sixties flashed the danger sign that people, almost as a Tolstoyan prophecy come true, insist on their own definition of art and cannot be pushed beyond certain limits. Today, the swing is back to realism and romanticism, but the heavily imitative and repetitious nature of much of the work may dim public enthusiasm.

If the audience seems detached from the arts today, then it is not a solitary phenomenon. There is evidence on every hand that the American people are in a general mood of withdrawal. The clamorous activism of the Sixties has given way to the distrust and disillusion of the Seventies. There is little disposition to rally around banners, whether new or old. It is a lean time for leaders.

The problem is not that persons of stature are vanishing. The problem is that the American people right now are not in a heroic mood. The face of their history has been disfigured by government itself. The deepest and most nourishing part of their tradition is the principle that government cannot make secret commitments which the people are then compelled to redeem. Yet through at least two presidencies, such commitments were made. The fact that the government would deliberately and consistently lie to the American people has cracked open the wall of confidence that they instinctively believed would never be breached. The endless horrors of Watergate have compounded that distrust and added to the disillusion.

We are back again, then, at the question Middleton Murry asked with reference to England 50 years ago: Is there anything or anyone people can trust? Can the individual trust himself?

Useful answers to those questions are not likely to come out of cynicism. The society cries out for regeneration and reintegration. Beyond that, the world has to be kept from sliding into a grotesque downward spiral. The nation has always been the ultimate form of human organization. Yet that institution is the principal factor in the downward spiral. It is no longer able to perform its historic function. It cannot protect the lives or property of its people; it cannot uphold their cultures or their values. The sudden compression of all the nations into a single geographic unit has produced no corresponding response in terms of an organization of the whole. Instead, there is virtual anarchy in the world arena.

Lloyd Coe
February 3, 1934
"Just six years ago today, dear, you answered my note in SRL's *Personals."*

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The problems inside the arena demand a world view, a world philosophy, a world sensitivity to the dangers that now extend to the whole of the human race. One problem is the bulging stockpile of nuclear weapons that could produce a global holocaust. The stockpile has long since passed the point at which it has any relationship to any theoretical military need. Yet the nuclear explosives pile higher each year, as though the nations are determined that, if war should come, no leaf or grain of sand would escape the furnace nor any evidence remain of a world exquisitely suited to life in all its forms.

A world dimension applies to the other major problems as well—contamination of the total environment, squandered resources, limping societies, too little food and too many people, persistence of social injustices, shrinkage in the conditions of creative growth.

These problems call for the highest energies and keenest perceptions of which the human race is capable. Cynicism blocks off access to those energies and dulls those perceptions, if only because the cynic positions himself for defeat. Progress begins with the idea that progress is possible. Cynicism begins with acceptance of the impossible.

Nothing is more false historically or more dangerous than the notion of helplessness. The past half-century, perhaps more than any previous period in history, has demonstrated that history is not immutable and that existing forces are not inexorable. In our lifetime, we have witnessed a vast enlargement in the definition of human uniqueness. The human species is unique because it alone can do things for the first time.

The opportunity for a journal such as the *Saturday Review*, therefore, is to argue for the proposition that human beings are equal to their needs, that a problem can be resolved if it can be perceived, that progress is what is left over after the seemingly impossible has been retired, and that the crisis today in human affairs is represented not by the absence of human capacity but by the failure to recognize that the capacity exists.

Optimism versus pessimism, like the arena versus the ivory tower, is a false issue. Certainly we should not minimize or blink at our problems in all their complexity. Neither ought we blind ourselves to untapped potentialities of brain and spirit for meeting them. N.C.

The Birth of the Phoenix

The early years of The Saturday Review of Literature

by George Stevens

When I think back to the innocent year of 1924 and to the nonchalant optimism with which *The Saturday Review of Literature* was launched, I find myself remembering a Mother Goose verse:

Three wise men of Gotham
Went to sea in a bowl:
And if the bowl had been stronger,
My song had been longer.

Well, after 50 years the bowl is still afloat. Actually, only two of the three were natives of Gotham, and one of them was a wise woman, Amy Loveman. And to be accurate, there were five, not three; though four years earlier, when the *Saturday Review*'s predecessor was established, three was the right number: Henry Seidel Canby, William Rose Benét, and Amy Loveman.

That predecessor was the *Literary Review* of the *New York Evening Post* (as it was called then); and the *Saturday Review* was its reincarnation, or continuation, rather than its successor. In March 1920 the editors of the *Post* had summoned Henry Seidel Canby from the Yale faculty to edit the *Literary Review*, which was to become a feature of each Saturday's issue of the paper; and Canby, pending his availability to be on the spot, called in William Rose Benét from a post on a magazine in Washington to act as editor pro tem and continue thereafter as associate editor. Amy Loveman had been on the staff of the book review section of the *Post* that preceded the *Literary Review;* and Christopher Morley, author of the "Bowling Green" column in the *Post*, naturally if gradually joined the other three by a process of spontaneous mutual attraction.

It is out of chronology, but not irrelevant, to mention that Morley was to edit for publication in 1937 a new edition of Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*, in which he would include Thomas Love Peacock's version of the verse I quoted at the outset:

Seamen three! What men be ye?
Gotham's three Wise Men we be,
Whither in your bowl so free?
To rake the moon from out the sea.
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine,
And our ballast is old wine.

That would have suited Morley as an epigraph.

Canby was a professor of English and accordingly, a man of definite literary opinions; but he was not the man to force his opinions on others, and he gave his associates and his contributors their heads. Bill Benét's particular interest was poetry; he also turned his hand to columns of current literary news and gossip and did a great deal of reviewing. To these columns Morley soon began to contribute, without giving up his own

George Stevens was editor, from 1938 to 1940, of The Saturday Review of Literature. *After leaving the* Review, *Mr. Stevens spent the next 30 years with J.B. Lippincott Co., retiring (as first vice-president) at the end of 1970. He is the author of* Speak for Yourself, John—*a biography of another* SR *figure, John Mason Brown.*

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that they will presently publish

The Saturday Review
OF LITERATURE

which will be edited by Henry Seidel Canby, Christopher Morley and the entire former staff of the Literary Review of the N. Y. Evening Post

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Hayes P. Darrow
William V. Griffin
Beton Hadden
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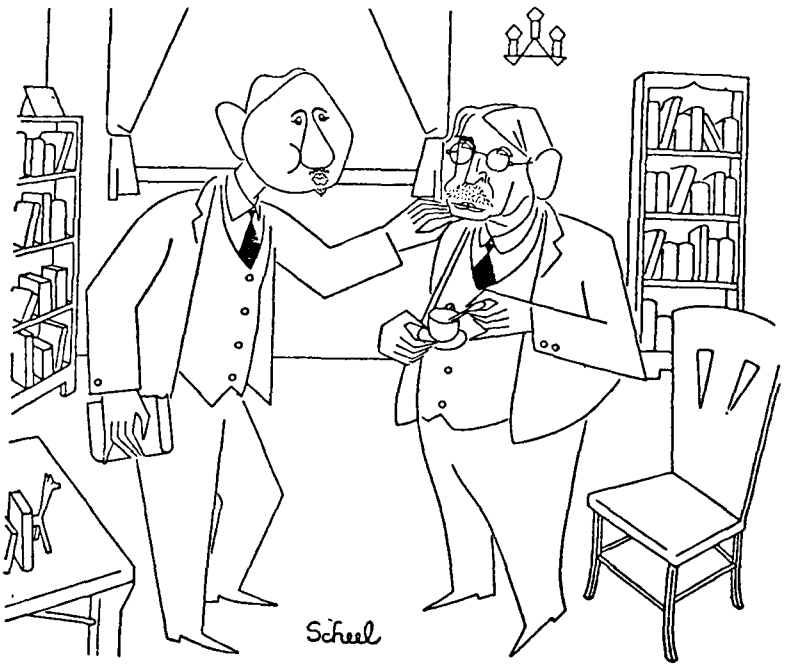
"Bowling Green" column in the daily paper. Morley had come to the *Post* from the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*; in 1920 he was 30 years old and already the author of several books. These included a small volume called *Travels in Philadelphia,* and for years he asserted that one of his missions in life was to make New York and Philadelphia love each other. Morley was a genuine man of letters, and if this characterization was already becoming an anachronism, he nonetheless continued enthusiastically to remain in character. This involved some resurrection of the eighteenth century: Chris was about as unlike Dr. Johnson as it was possible to be; yet assuredly he wanted to play an analogous part in his own generation. His excellent invention, the Three Hours for Lunch Club, was his counterpart of Johnson's Literary Club.

Amy Loveman was Canby's right arm. Either she did the work for the editorial staff—apart from what the others actually wrote—or she saw that it was done. She was invariably good-natured and unruffled, intelligent, knowledgeable, level-headed. And she was the very soul of generosity. She was to continue to be Canby's right arm on the *Saturday Review* and, later, the right arm of the three editors who succeeded him.

The *Literary Review* continued for four years; then, in the spring of 1924, the *New York Evening Post*, brilliant editorially but unsuccessful financially, was sold to Cyrus H. K. Curtis and his Curtis Publishing Company. The handwriting appeared on the wall for the *Literary Review* as significantly as it had for Belshazzar during what was surely the most disastrous dinner party until the ghost of Banquo ruined Macbeth's. Christopher Morley produced a Parthian shot in his final "Bowling Green": remembering that there was a character in *The Taming of the Shrew* named Curtis, he riffled through the pages and came upon the line: "A cold world, Curtis, in every office but thine; and therefore, fire!" This did not survive the first edition of the paper.

The history of the first decade of the *Saturday Review*—and of the four preceding years of the *Literary Review* of the *New York Evening Post*—was recorded in a pamphlet by William Rose Benét entitled *Reviewing Ten Years*. It was issued in 1933, which happened also to be the year when I joined the staff of the *Review*—first in the advertising department, later as an associate editor, still later as managing editor.[*] Much of the foregoing information, including Morley's Curtis quotation, is derived from Benét's pamphlet, to which grateful acknowledgment is made. Another important source is *American Memoir* by Henry Seidel Canby (1947). The editorial founders of the *Saturday Review* are no longer alive, but Noble Cathcart, the original business manager, later to become the publisher, still is; and I have fortunately been able to call on Mr. Cathcart to answer some of my questions about those earlier days.

[*] Mr. Stevens also served as editor for about two years, beginning in March 1938. Obviously, this is neither an oversight nor an absence of pride; G.S. would rather be tortured than appear to call attention to himself. N.C.



Theodore Scheel

SRL*'s first cartoon, July 22, 1933, was less cartoon than commentary. It caricatured Will Durant and John Dewey. Will Durant: "They tell me you're a philosopher, too, Mr. Dewey."*

Between May and August the four editors, together with Cathcart, who had been circulation manager of the *Post,* organized their new publication. In *American Memoir* Canby discreetly says that they built up a respectable, if small, circulation by knowing what kind of people to approach in their mailings.

From the outset *SRL* was backed financially by the J. P. Morgan partner, Thomas W. Lamont. Mr. Lamont was one of the group that had owned the *New York Evening Post* and sold it to Curtis; another of the group was Owen D. Young, with whom Mr. Lamont had been associated in 1919 on the American Committee to Negotiate Peace. Thomas Lamont's interest in journalism was deep and constant, and it remained active in spite of the pressures of financial and international affairs. He had been on the staff of the *Harvard Crimson,* and during college vacations he had worked as a reporter for the Albany *Evening Journal.* His first job after graduation from Harvard in 1892 was as a reporter on the old New York *Tribune.* Evidently, he wanted to keep his connection with the *Post*'s *Literary Review,* which he admired, and he put up five-sixths of the capital to start *SRL* (together with Time, Inc., which put up the remainder; that was to be bought back, as we shall see). He continued for about 15 years to underwrite the *Review*'s deficits—which were quite modest (*SRL* actually operated in the black in 1928 and 1929). He was always an admirer of good writing, and he liked and admired the staff of the *Literary Review.*

The first issue of *The Saturday Review of Literature* was dated August 2, 1924. Curiously, there seems to have been no effort by the new journal to introduce itself. The editors apparently expected their readers to take it for granted that the magazine had a reason for being. The front page contained two editorials, one called "Good and Bad Reviewing"; the other, "Timely and Timeless." In one of these Mr. Canby wrote: "To my mind,

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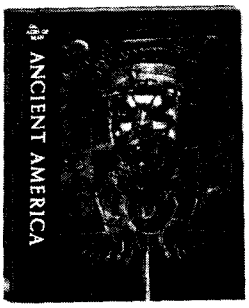

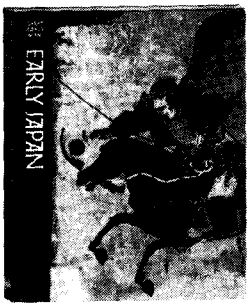

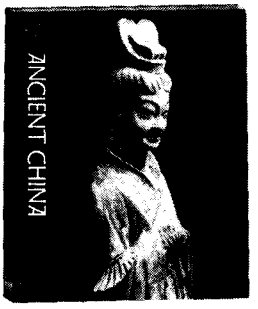

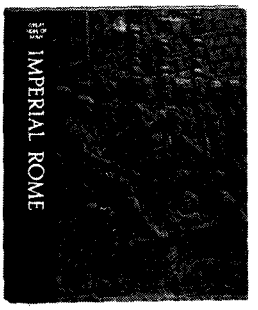

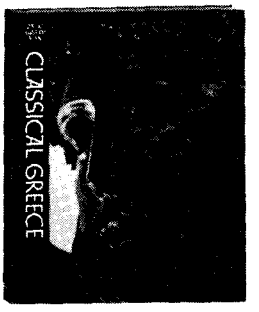

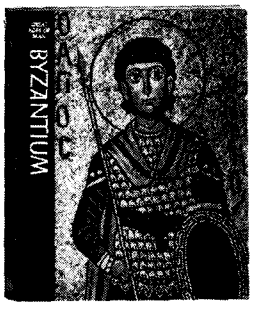

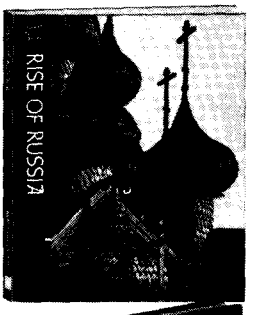

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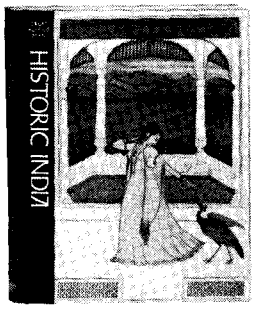

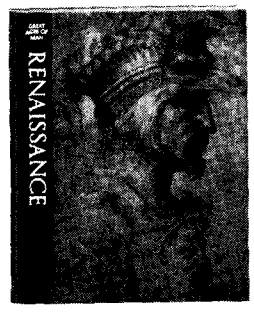

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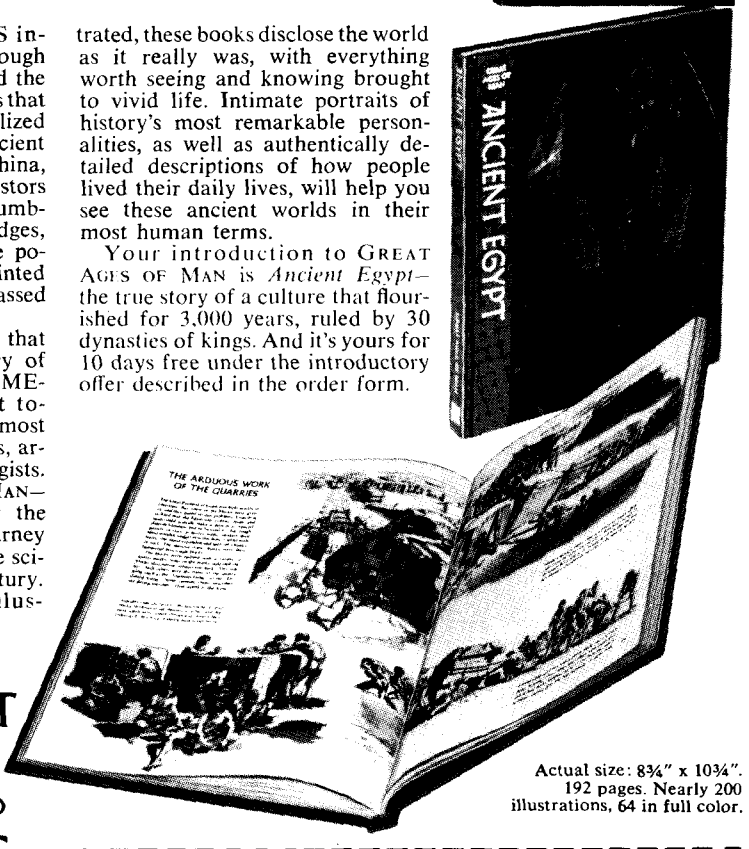

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one of the most deceptive statements ever uttered is that life is more interesting than literature." This was a subject to which he was often to return. Another of his preoccupations was over the difference between criticism and reviewing; and one cannot help feeling, in looking over the early issues, that he wished he were editing a critical magazine rather than a weekly review of current books. As Benét pointed out in *Reviewing Ten Years*, during 1926 Canby "began to publish certain of his essays on older American writers: Bret Harte, Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, etc." From the outset *SRL* had Morley's "Bowling Green," May Lamberton Becker's "Reader's Guide," and Benét's own "Phoenix Nest," at first a gossip column, later devoted to reviews of poetry. Again curiously, the new symbol of the phoenix was left to speak (or whatever noise a phoenix makes) for itself. Obviously enough, it represented the emergence of *SRL* from the ashes of the *Literary Review*.

How did it happen that Time, Inc., which issued the weekly newsmagazine, then only a year old, was the first publisher of the *Saturday Review*? At Yale, Henry Canby had known *Time*'s brilliant young founders, Henry Luce and Briton Hadden. It was only natural that he would turn to them for help. Time, Inc., continued as publisher of *SRL* until the beginning of 1926. The issue of January 30 of that year contained this announcement: "The Saturday Review Company, Inc., has purchased the stock interest of Time, Inc., in *The Saturday Review of Literature*. Commencing with the issue of February 6, 1926, *The Saturday Review of Literature* will be published by the Saturday Review Company, Inc.—Henry Seidel Canby, President." This statement followed a melodramatic event. *Time* was then being printed in Cleveland; so was *SRL*, while it was published by Time, Inc. The melodramatic event was the crashing of an airmail plane in the Pennsylvania mountains with all the copy and cuts for an issue of *SRL*. The editors managed to get the issue out anyway, thanks in part to Mrs. Irita Van Doren of the New York Herald-Tribune Books, who supplied some copy, presumably out of her overset. But never again. From now on, announced *SRL*, the magazine would be printed in New York. Noble Cathcart now took the reins. His influence was later to be vigorously exercised.

Meanwhile, let us look at a few of the sights along the roadside. Joseph Conrad died in 1924, leaving the manuscript of an unfinished novel entitled "Suspense." From June to September 1925—almost certainly owing to the persuasions of Conrad's ardent admirer, Christopher Morley—*SRL* serialized "Suspense," offering a series of prizes for the best essay on a probable ending. The first prize went to Samuel C. Chew, professor of English at Bryn Mawr, who later wrote the inspired line in connection with a well-known writer, "A pose is a pose is a pose."

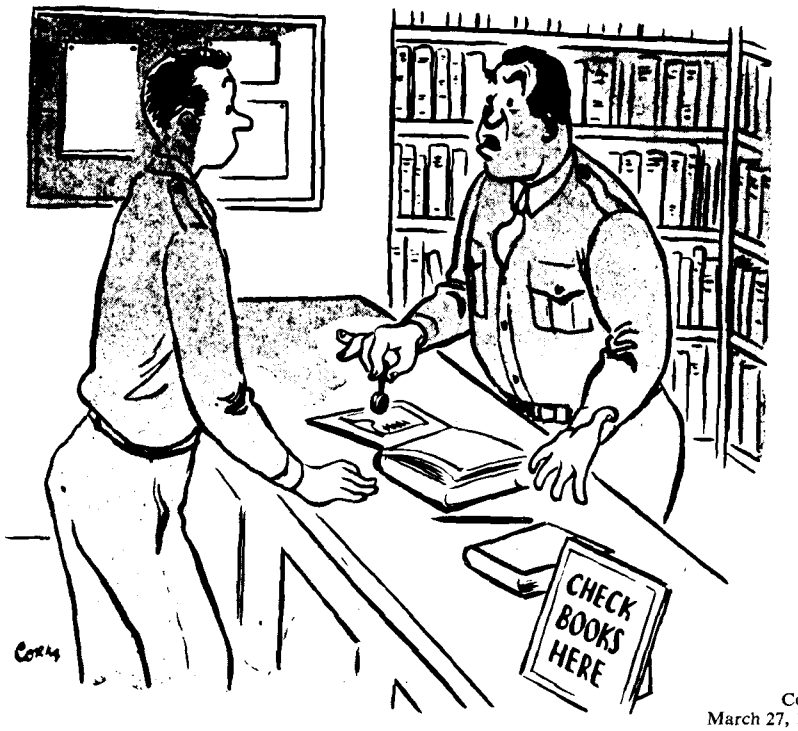
Among the early reviewers, in addition to the editors on the staff, were James Harvey Robinson, William Lyon Phelps, Lee Wilson Dodd, Sinclair Lewis, Joseph Wood Krutch, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Allan Nevins, and Elmer Davis—the two last-named were to be regular and valuable contributors for many years. Rebecca West wrote an essay on "Interpreters of Their Age," the interpreters being Shaw and Hardy. H. W. Nevinson wrote a glowing review of E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*.

SRL was by no means unappreciative of important new books. To take two more instances of its treatment of novels that have survived: Bill Benét reviewed *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald in the issue of May 9, 1925, and called it "amazing in its excitement and gusto." And in the issue of December 11, 1926, Cleveland B. Chase called Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* "one of the events of a year rich in interesting books." But if the reviewers were excited, the magazine itself did not seem to be; neither of these reviews was in any way featured. As one goes over the early issues, one has a sense that excitement was not part of *SRL*'s intention.

About the same time, Canby started an occasional column called "Notes of a Rapid Reader," in which he spoke of the characters of *The Sun Also Rises* as "wraiths blowing down the wind" in the December 18, 1926, issue, the issue immediately following Chase's review. Morley and Benét were sometimes capable of making a noise when the spirit moved them, but in retrospect one has the feeling that they were not always able to kindle excitement in their readers—possibly because their tastes were highly individual, not to say occasionally eccentric. Possibly it was the format of the magazine; the emphasis on literary editorials rather than reviews; and Canby's underlying—if not always explicit—point of view that the reviewing of current books is all very well, but that criticism of the lasting works of literature is the real thing.

Just the same, Canby was soon to ally himself with the distribution of current books in a way that was to have enormous and unforeseen consequences. An

(Continued on page 56.



Corka
March 27, 1943

"Sarge heard I'd subscribed to The Saturday Review of Literature. *Now look at me!"*

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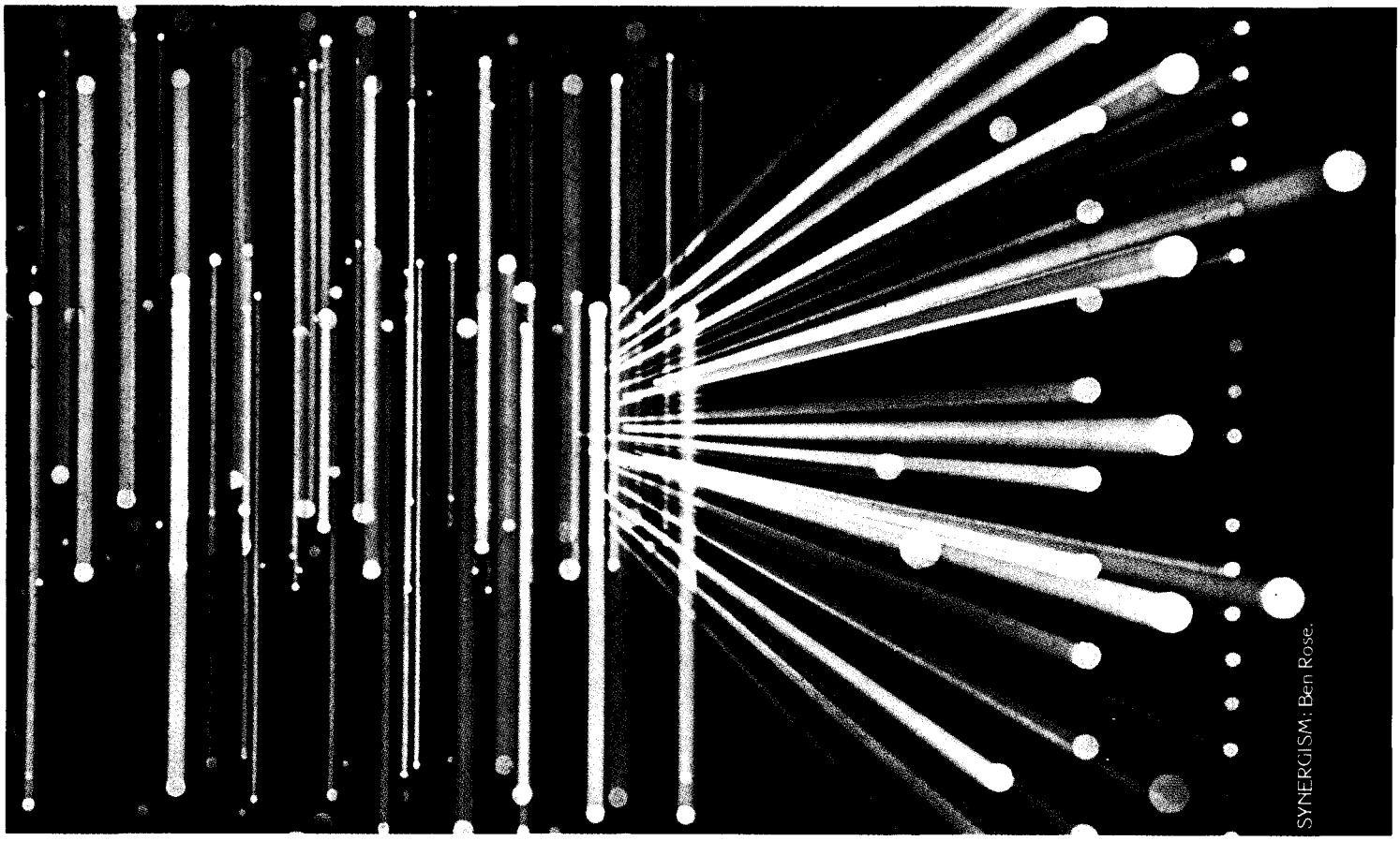

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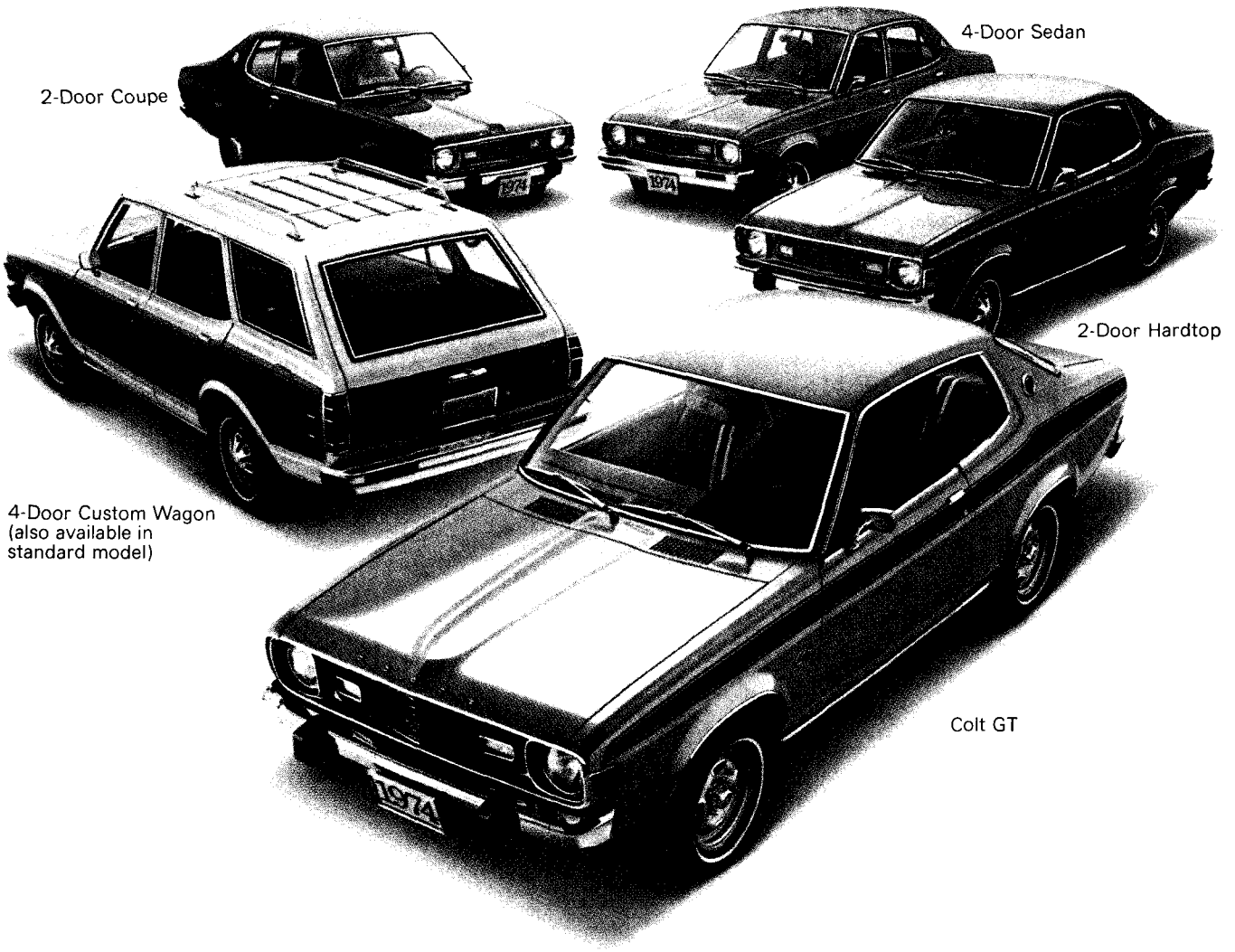

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Saturday Review
World

America in the Age of No Confidence

In the watershed decade of the Sixties, America suddenly moved from a climate of continuity and certainty into one of danger and despair.

by Henry Steele Commager

In 1924, when the *Saturday Review* was founded, Americans were still living in the world that had emerged out of the watershed era of the 1890s. That decade was the true beginning of modern America—the America that persisted until just the other day—for the pattern of thought and life ushered in during that seminal decade continued until well past the Second World War. It was the Nineties that witnessed and sponsored fateful developments: the shift from rural to urban America; from the "old" immigration to the "new"; from isolation to some form of internationalism or at least of world power; the rise of trusts and monopolies, and of organized labor; the beginnings of effective government regulation of the economy; the passing of the frontier and the formulation of a historical philosophy based upon that phenomenon; the impact of evolution and of pragmatism on religion and philosophy, sociology and jurisprudence, politics and history; the beginnings of "progressive" education; and in literature and the arts, the displacement of romanticism by realism. The books that provide the longitude and latitude for the Twenties—and thereafter—came for the most part from that earlier decade: Lester Ward's *Psychic Factors of Civilization*, Thorstein Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, Henry Lloyd's *Wealth Against Commonwealth*, William James's *The Principles of Psychology*, John Dewey's *The School and Society*, and others equally explosive.

Americans of the Twenties were still fighting the political, economic, and intellectual battles precipitated by the publication of these books and by the issues thus agitated. They had not yet settled the question of the welfare state—after all, Harding and Coolidge had no sympathy with that development. They had not yet carried to logical conclusions the implications of the new constitutional provisions for equality of the races. They had not yet reached agreement concerning the issue of isolation versus world power, and if Harding talked out of both sides of his mouth on this issue, he talked most eloquently out of the isolationist side. They had not yet reconciled orthodox religion with Darwinian evolution, and it was, after all, Bryan who won the Scopes trial, not Darrow. And they had not yet persuaded the courts to accept the implications of sociological jurisprudence launched by Roscoe Pound and Justice Holmes two decades earlier. Women had won the vote in 1920, but they were still far from enjoying full equality or "liberation," and the influence of Freudian psychology was still pretty well limited to literature and art. A quarter-century after Dewey's *The School and Society*, and a century and a half after Rousseau's *Émile*, progressive education was still suspect. When, in 1930, Vernon Parrington published the last volume of his magisterial survey of American liberal thought, he confessed that he had little to present for the Twenties that had not first emerged a quarter-century earlier.

Even the Second World War did not break the continuity of those earlier

Henry Steele Commager, a lecturer at Amherst College, has recently published Britain Through American Eyes.

The Granger Collection

Shelly Rusten: Black Star

Theodore Roosevelt family, 1907; Woodstock, N. Y., "family," 1969—A dissipation of "intellectual capital."

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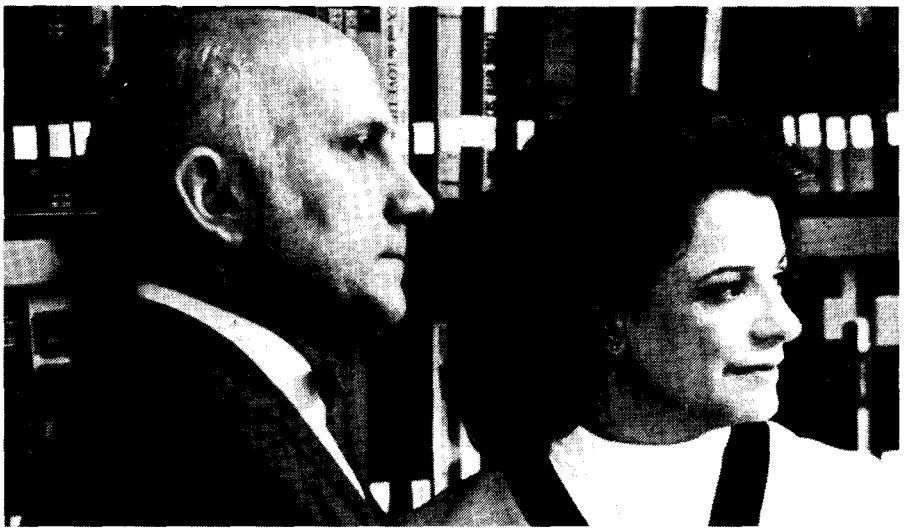
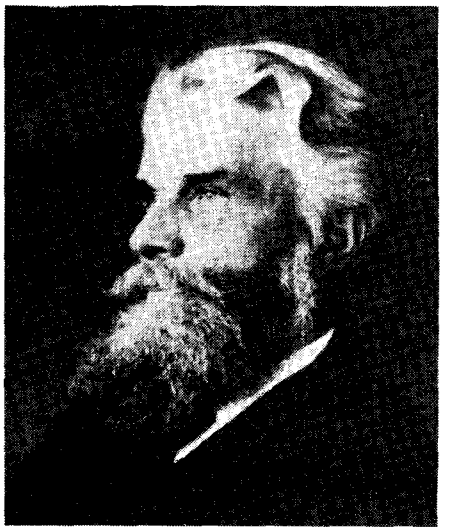


Wide World



Culver

Masters and Johnson and Havelock Ellis—Born in literature, the sexual revolution came of age in the lab.

ideas: it was itself, in a sense, the climax of forces set in motion by the events of the Nineties—the emergence into world power, the annexation of Hawaii and of the Philippines, the reassertion of hegemony in the Caribbean, the modernization of the navy, and the construction of the Panama Canal.

The real break with the world of the Nineties did not come until our own time. It is the Sixties that will loom as large on the historical topography as the Nineties and that will be seen as the watershed of the last years of the twentieth century.

For it was the Sixties that broke, dramatically and even convulsively, with the world that had been fashioned in the previous three-quarters of a century. It was then that Americans—and others everywhere on the globe—moved into a world that was new, dangerous, and perhaps unmanageable. Thus the first half of the life of the *Saturday Review* was lived in what its first editor, Henry Seidel Canby, called the Age of Confidence; the second has extended into what we may come to denominate the Age of Disillusionment, perhaps even the Age of Despair.

To THE CREDIT of the long generation that stretched from the Nineties to the Fifties of this century, in America at least, the era deserved the appellation the Age of Confidence. It was a questing generation, this generation that was born in the Nineties and came to maturity in the first quarter of the century, but not an indecisive one, and we can see now that it was both imaginative and constructive. It settled, once and for all, the vexatious question of the ability of the American people to reconcile individual liberty with the welfare state and to use government as a major instrument for social justice; it thus brought the United States into the mainstream of the twentieth century. It went far to vindicate, and even to realize, the promise of equality and of equal protection of the laws promised in the Fourteenth Amendment: *Brown* v. *Topeka* was the climax of an old era as well as the beginning of a new. It carried through what we can now see was an economic revolution, by raising pretty generally the standards of living for the average man; a social revolution, by enlarging the rights of women, blacks, and other minority groups; and an intellectual revolution, by enlarging and enriching the education available to the young. It survived a depression without resort to totalitarian methods—something that cannot be said of many of the older and more sophisticated nations of the Old World. And, finally, the pre-Sixties generations fought two world wars without giving undue authority to the military or fatally endangering the liberties of citizens—something that cannot be said of our wars in the Sixties.

Philosophical and intellectual problems are rarely "solved"; they forfeit our interest and evaporate. It cannot be said that the generation which came to maturity in the early years of the century "solved" the problem of the reconciling of religion and evolution; we can say only that the problem no longer seemed of any importance. It cannot be said that progressive education formally triumphed, merely that it came to be taken so much for granted that even those who overtly rejected it taught it in their schools. Nor can we assert that the sexual revolution inaugurated by an Ellen Key, a Havelock Ellis, or a Henrik Ibsen emancipated American women from bondage, but that it prepared the way for the sexual revolution of our own day—a revolution formulated and inspired by the last generation and made possible in ours by the Pill.

So, too, in the realm of foreign policy and America's role in world affairs. When the *Saturday Review* was founded, Americans were still hotly debating "isolation" versus "internationalism." President Wilson had carried the nation into war, but he could not carry it into the League of Nations, and with the emergence of communism and fascism, Americans reverted to their traditional suspicion of Europe and to their moral and cultural isolationism. The debate went on all through the Thirties; it was settled, not by the logic of reason, but by the logic of events. For just as the greatest constitutional decision in our history was made at Appomattox, so the greatest decision in the realm of foreign policy was made at Pearl Harbor. With the Second World War, many of the foreign-policy issues so earnestly debated during the previous half-century took on an air of unreality. But however costly the hesitations and inconsistencies of that policy from 1914 to 1942, it takes on the character of enlightened statesmanship when contrasted with the mindless aggressions of the Fifties and Sixties.

The major contrast between the water-

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Confessions of a magazine reader-revisited.

by DAVID OGILVY
Author of "Confessions of an Advertising Man"

I READ 34 magazines every month. I like them all, but the one I *admire* most is Reader's Digest.

The editors of The Digest are in possession of a remarkable technique: *they know how to present complicated subjects in a way that engages the reader.*

This gives the editors of The Digest great influence in the world. They put their influence to admirable use.

They are on the side of the angels. They are crusaders, and they carry their crusades, in 13 languages, to 100 million souls each and every month.

They crusade against cigarettes, which kill people. They crusade against billboards, which make the world hideous. They crusade against boxing, which turns men into vegetables. They crusade against pornography.

They crusade for integration, for the inter-faith movement, for the Public Defender system, for human freedom in all its forms.

Good Pope John once told The Digest editors, "How comforting it will be for you, when you come to the close of your lives on earth, to be able to say to yourselves: *We have served the truth.*"

No log-rolling, no back-scratching

Nineteen years ago Reader's Digest first opened its columns to advertising. This worried me. I was afraid that The Digest editors would start pulling their punches in deference to advertisers and even give editorial support to advertisers – an obvious temptation to magazine editors. But this has not happened; The Digest has remained incorruptible. No log-rolling, no back-scratching.

The success of The Digest is deserved. It does not depend on prurience, voyeurism or cheap sensationalism. What The Digest editors offer their readers are *ideas, education* (practical and spiritual) and *self-improvement.*

The instinct of these editors is toward *clarity of expression.*

The current issue, as I write, includes articles on religion in schools, on the Congo, urban renewal, violence on television, Abraham Lincoln and safe driving. Each of these subjects is presented in a way which I can understand. If I did not read about them in The Digest, I wouldn't read about them anywhere. I wouldn't have the time.

Some highbrows may look down their noses at The Digest, charging it with superficiality and over-simplification. There is a modicum of justice in this charge; you *can* learn more about the Congo if you read about it in *Foreign Affairs Quarterly,* and you can learn more about Abraham Lincoln if you read Carl Sandburg's books about him. But have you time?

Never boring

I seldom read a highbrow magazine without wishing that a Digest editor had worked his will upon it. I would then find it more *readable.* The Digest articles are never long-winded, never obscure, never boring.

I also admire the editors' *courage.* They have the guts to open their readers' minds on delicate subjects. They grasp nettles. Like venereal disease, cancer, mental illness. They are not humorless prigs. Their sense of humor is uproarious. They make me *laugh.*

Editorial technique

Their *techniques* fascinate me. First, the way they present the contents on the cover – a tantalizing menu which invites you to the feast inside. (I have never understood why *all* magazines don't do this.)

Second, the ingenious way they write the titles on their articles. They pique your curiosity – and they promise to satisfy it. For example:

What Truckers Say About Your Driving
Professional drivers sound off on the most common – and dangerous – faults of the amateur.

How could anybody resist reading an article with a title like that?

I earn my living as a copywriter in an advertising agency. It is a matter of life and death for me to get people to read my advertisements. I have discovered that more than half the battle is to write headlines which grab people's attention and *force* them to read the copy. *I learned how to do this by studying headlines in The Digest.*

The Digest editors do not start their articles in the front of the magazine and carry them over in the back. They carry you through their magazine without this maddening interruption, and I bless them for it.

The battle for men's minds

You and I, gentle reader, live in the United States, and we think of The Reader's Digest as an *American* magazine. So it is – 18 million Americans buy it every month. But it is also published in 22 other countries – 11,615,000 copies a month. It is the most popular magazine in several countries abroad, including all of the Spanish-speaking countries.

The International editions of The Digest carry more or less the same articles as the U.S. editions. The editors have discovered that subjects which are important to people in Iowa, California and New York are equally important to people in France, Tokyo and Rio.

Thus it comes about that Digest editors have a profound influence on people who are free to read what they want. *This magazine exports the best in American life.*

In my opinion, The Digest is doing as much as the United States Information Agency to win the battle for men's minds.

Credit where credit is due. I know nobody who deserves the gratitude of their fellow Americans more than DeWitt and Lila Acheson Wallace. The Digest is the lengthened shadow of these two great editors. Theirs are the names at the top of the masthead. It is the most formidable of all mastheads: no less than 208 men and women. Among them you will find some of the most distinguished journalists in the world. No other magazine is so richly endowed with professional competence.

Some magazines are dominated by the men who sell advertising space. In my experience, there has never been a good magazine which was not, like The Digest, dominated by its *editors.*

Long live The Reader's Digest!

David Ogilvy

"Some years back Reader's Digest asked me if I would comment on why so many people all over the world read it. I agreed to try, because I regard The Digest as a major force for good in the world, and I wanted to say so. My observations at that time hold true today. Only the figures needed revising."

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Saturday Review **World**

"A review of ideas, the arts and the human condition"

THE PHOENIX . . . truly the SR/W emblem of immortality

We are proud to have helped the Phoenix return to its nest . . .
Rumford Press, Inc. extends its congratulations on your 50th anniversary year and a still more meaningful 50 years to come.

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shed of the Nineties and that of the Sixties is that in the Nineties the topography was national; in the Sixties it was global. The problems that clamored for solution in the Nineties were American. The origins of the philosophical revolution were, to be sure, in Europe, but it was possible to direct the movement to the domestic arena, to operate it, as it were, according to American rules. We were not the victims of forces beyond our control: it was our decision, not Destiny, that took us into the Pacific and to Asia. We still had ample resources: it was up to us to conserve them or to exploit them. We could fight a great war and still return to isolation. We could build up (and we had not yet created that one weapon which was irrevocably global) an immense military and then liquidate it. We could consider the growth of population and the possibility of birth control as a domestic, even a personal, problem, not as part of a world problem. The Great Depression was, to be sure, a worldwide phenomenon, but curiously enough, it deepened and sharpened isolationism, and the most influential body of economic thought—that associated with John Maynard Keynes—was read in terms of solutions that each nation might make for itself.

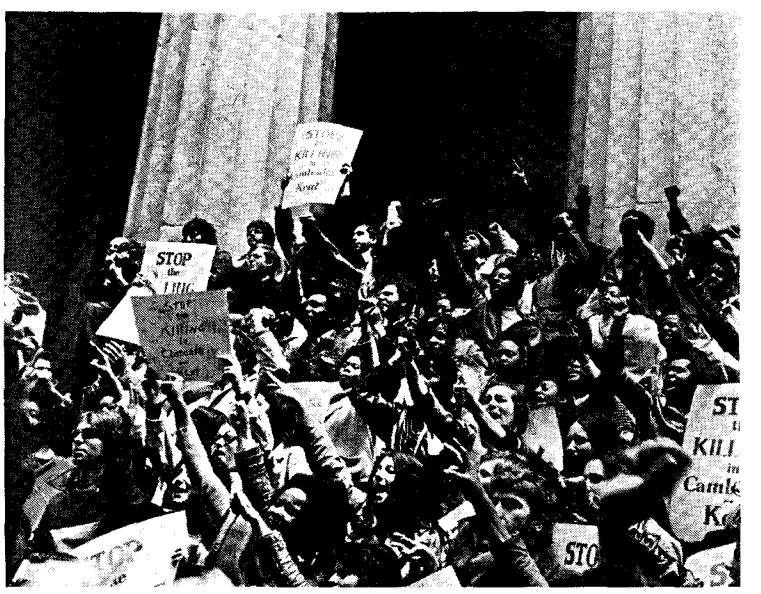
WHAT THE SIXTIES made clear is the fact that we are no longer in command of our own destinies. Wendell Willkie could talk of one world, but what emerged after the war was a world more conspicuously divided than at any other time in history: one in which the three great powers glared incessantly upon each other while the underdeveloped peoples of the three largest continents seethed with revolution.

At the same time the Sixties proved the obsolescence of nationalism. If none of the great problems can indeed be solved by any one nation, then the persistence of the national approach to global problems is a pernicious example of cultural lag, one that may cost mankind its life. It was Santayana who observed that our minds were like geological strata: at one level Eocene, at another Jurassic, at still another Pliocene. So with our society collectively—in some matters we can think cosmically, in others globally, in others continentally, but in most, only nationally or locally. The palpable fact is that ardent nationalism will lead us, if we persist in it, to war and ruin—nationalism that takes the form of Palestinian murders in Israel or elsewhere, or French atomic detonations in the South Seas, or American military forays into the Caribbean or Vietnam, or simply American readiness to use up ten times the country's normal share of natural resources.

It is in the realm of world politics that the decade of the Sixties worked the most profound, dramatic, and revolutionary changes in the pattern of American life. In 1945 the United States bestrode the world like a colossus. She was the only nation to emerge from the greatest and most terrible of wars physically unscathed and undiminished in wealth and in power. In the immediate post-war years, the United States used her hegemony on the whole wisely and benignly: what is most memorable from these years is, after all, the Marshall Plan, which primed the historical pump for the almost miraculous re-invigoration of Europe. No wonder that—except in Communist countries—there was general agreement that this was to be the American century.

TWENTY YEARS LATER no one was talking about the American century, not even Americans. To be sure, American influence had spread around the globe, but that was a process neither of American pressure nor of the American example but—just as de Tocqueville had foreseen more than a century earlier—of the operation of the principle of equality in European society. But, in a more serious sense, the assumption that this was to be an American century was already outmoded. After having undergone the tyranny of Stalin and the torture of a war that cost her 20 million lives, Russia emerged as one of the great powers of the globe, industrializing her new "west" even faster than Americans had industrialized theirs in the nineteenth century, building up her scientific and technological resources, her military might, and her ideological alliances. China, saved from Japanese rule, rid itself of the corruption and ineptitude of Chiang Kai-shek and created, in 20 years, a new order, a new prosperity, and a new role in history: the oldest of civilizations became overnight the newest of world

Keystone Press



Michael Abramson: Black Star

New Yorkers celebrate V-E Day, 1945, protest Indochina war, 1970—From world colossus to colossal mistake.

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powers. The re-creation of Russia and China as equal powers had been foreseen by scholars and statesmen as early as the Fifties. But those who guided our destinies in Washington were so bemused by their own concept of history that they not only refused to credit the evidence that was all about them but also punished those bold enough to point to it.

It was fateful that the United States failed to recognize, and the American people to understand, the very different revolutions which transformed Czarist Russia into the Soviet Union and the China of American romance and missionary zeal into the China of Mao Tse-tung. Yet that was perhaps understandable enough, for the Soviet Union was deeply suspicious of, and hostile to, the United States in the post-war years, and on the other side of the globe, Americans had committed themselves uncritically to the fortunes (and the misfortunes) of Chiang Kai-shek. What was more difficult to understand, and what dramatizes therefore the profound changes brought about by the watershed of the Fifties and the Sixties, was that, increasingly after the start of the Cold War, we placed ourselves not only against revolution in Russia and China but also against revolution everywhere. We who were ourselves the firstborn of revolution failed tragically to understand the greatest revolution of modern history—the greatest indeed since the Renaissance and the discovery of America. We failed to understand sympathetically the convulsive effort of two-thirds of the people of the globe to emerge out of centuries of poverty, exploitation, and misrule, and to catch up, in one great convulsive leap, with the prosperous and progressive nations of the West. We who were in our youth the beacon light of revolution, and who inspired revolutionary fervor in France and Spain and Greece and Italy and in the people of Latin America, set ourselves adamantly against revolution in our time. We became, for the second half of the twentieth century, what the Holy Alliance had been (or tried to be) in the first quarter of the nineteenth and what Britain was in much of the later years of the nineteenth: the champions of the status quo, of power and privilege, and the implacable opponent of those who wanted to break away from the past and come out into the sunlight of freedom and independence. Brazil and Chile and Guatemala and Korea and Laos and Vietnam felt our heavy hand—sometimes through overt intervention (as in Cuba and Vietnam), more often by the covert intervention of the CIA operating secretly throughout the globe.

Now, after a quarter-century, this may be changing. If *realpolitik* permits a rapprochement with China and Russia and the abandonment of Chiang Kai-shek, perhaps it will allow greater independence from a Franco in Spain, a Thieu in Vietnam, the colonels in Greece and the generals in Brazil, and the white minorities in Rhodesia and in South Africa. It is possible that all this may signal not only the thawing out of the Cold War but also the abandonment of those ideological assumptions and commitments that were so largely responsible for the catastrophe of our foreign policy in the Fifties and the Sixties.

Wide World

Bread line, 1930; supermarket, 1972—

For it was during these two decades that what Prof. Samuel Flagg Bemis called The Great Aberration reached its climax—and its denouement. That aberration was, of course, the notion that because we were a Pacific Ocean power, we could and should be an Asian mainland power, a principle which, if applied logically, would have required China, Japan, and Russia to be American powers. The notion was not, originally, the conclusion of a reasoned argument, but the rationalization of a series of almost fortuitous developments: the annexation of Hawaii, the conquest of the Philippines (President McKinley did not even know that the Filipinos were Catholic but spoke of our duty to "Christianize" them), intervention in the Boxer uprising, and sponsorship of the Open Door policy in China—a policy whose implications were never made clear. Once we had persuaded ourselves that we were an Asian power, it was easy to find support for that bizarre idea in our long record of missionary activity in China, in the fear of a Japan able to defeat Russia, and in resentment against the Japanese who had flooded into our Pacific coastal states—resentment that reached its shameful climax in the "relocation" of those victims of our paranoia during the Second World War. Finally, and with much greater logic and legitimacy, we found justification for our Asian ambitions in the role we had been called to play in restraining Japanese expansion throughout Asia and the Pacific in the decade of the Thirties.

AFTER THE DEFEAT of Germany, we assumed responsibility for the restoration of Europe and continued to play a dominant part in European affairs. It is easy to understand why we applied the same logic to Asia: namely, that having defeated Japan and freed mainland China from Japanese control, we had a continuing responsibility to sustain Chiang Kai-shek, protect South Korea, reorder the affairs of the whole of Southeast Asia. It was this fallacious notion that we had to play the same role in Asia which we had played in Europe—and that we had the same experience, the same understanding, and the same competence with which to play that role—which led to the disasters of the next quarter-century. Thus our blind insistence that Chiang Kai-shek somehow represented the "real" China; thus the illusion that we could somehow "contain" Chinese communism; thus our delusion that the place to contain China was not China but Southeast Asia. Above all, there was our decision—one of the most fatuous in our history—to take over from the French the hopeless struggle to subdue Vietnam.

The miscalculations inspired by The Great Aberration have proved the most costly in our history since the South's

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Doug Wilson: Black Star

...nomic revolution without totalitarianism.

blunders about slavery and secession in 1860. The cost, to be sure, fell far more heavily upon the peoples of Asia than upon us. After a decade of savage destruction of a country with which we had no quarrel and to which we had no obligations, even those responsible for the folly of war had to acknowledge that the whole thing had been a colossal mistake—a blunder which destroyed Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos physically and the United States morally. This surely was the meaning of President Nixon's decision to withdraw.

It is not yet clear whether we have learned the lessons of the Cold War and the Vietnam war—the elementary lesson that so many great powers have had to learn for themselves: that Providence has not singled them out to order the affairs of the globe, but that we must share with all other nations responsibility for the survival of civilization—in short, that we have neither the power nor the wisdom nor the grace to impose our will or our way of life upon all mankind.

Perhaps nothing so distinguishes the watershed of the Sixties from that of the Nineties as the absence of creativity. We lived for more than half a century on the intellectual capital bequeathed to us by the Nineties. What intellectual capital have the last decades bequeathed to us? Except in the realm of science and, perhaps, in the arts, what is most characteristic now is the dearth of creative statesmen, philosophers—of institutions and ideas. We have no Theodore Roosevelt or Woodrow Wilson in Washington, no one to take the place of William James or John Dewey in philosophy, no Lester Ward or Jane Addams in sociology and social reform, no Veblen or Patten in economics, no Holmes or Brandeis in the law, no Henry Adams or Charles Beard in history, no Charles Eliot or William Harper in education.

IT IS NOT SURPRISING that the mark of the Sixties should be, not a body of new ideas, but a return to romanticism, and to romanticism in its most irrational form, for the current romanticism is closer by far to that of *Sturm und Drang* than to that of Wordsworth and Emerson. The stigmata of the new romanticism are familiar enough: an intense subjectivity; a preoccupation with private, rather than public, problems; a propensity to both physical and emotional violence; a revulsion against theology and a revival of mysticism in religion—or in the new emotional experiments that are substitutes for religion. This kind of romanticism also exhibits an almost mystical attitude toward nature; a pervasive sentimentalism in music and in much of literature; a new interest in childhood and in the cult of youth as the special repository of virtue and wisdom; an impatience with institutions, formalities, disciplines of all kinds; a distrust of experience and a preference for the intuitive; a rejection of reason and logic in favor of passion and emotion. How odd that this revival of romanticism should coincide with the triumph of the cosmic—and therefore the impersonal—in science. Perhaps it is astronomy's vast and incomprehensible extension of the universe, which threatens to dwarf man, and the triumphs of scientific technology, which threaten to dwarf the fruits of art and music and literature, that have led to the cultivation of what is private, emotional, and irrational.

In any event, as the familiar certainties slipped away—in religion, philosophy, science, politics, and social morality—there was a gratifying retreat from ideology with all its attendant dangers. Concepts such as making the world free for democracy or the American century or the Cold War or a special body of "commitments" in Vietnam were themselves based upon ideological assumptions. They tried to persuade us that the struggle with the Soviet Union, and then with China, was a kind of Armageddon where we stood and battled for the Lord. They created and then exacerbated the Cold War and extended it to embrace Asia as well as Europe, and—by a kind of mad illogic—America itself. They seduced us into McCarthyism—for McCarthy, too, was battling the forces of darkness, and his attack on "Communists" took on the nature and the passion of a crusade. They justified reliance on military power and—for a time—on the atomic weapon for our ultimate salvation; they carried us into Vietnam, which indeed proved to be the Armageddon so long anticipated; and, in a curious sense, they carried us into Watergate as well, for Nixon's justification of his misconduct was basically the same as McCarthy's—namely, that it was all justified by larger considerations of something called "national security."

NOW, AFTER DECADES of suspense and danger, we have emerged into a political landscape full of inviting features: the liquidation of our part in the Vietnam war; the détente with the Soviets and with China; the possibility of a genuine limitation on atomic weapons; the temporary settlement of the Pakistan-India and the Arab-Israel conflicts; the triumph of moderation in most of Western Europe and even—it seems—in the Soviet Union and China; stirrings of life in the United Nations; and the dramatic revelation of the interdependence of every nation in the globe provided by the energy crisis of 1973-74. Against this background, global suicide seems less imminent now than at any time since the Berlin blockade, a quarter-century ago. Perhaps we are at last learning the truth of President Kennedy's admonition to the Irish Parliament in June of 1963: "Across the gulfs and barriers that now divide us, we must remember that there are no permanent enemies. Hostility today is a fact, but it is not a ruling law. The supreme reality today is our own individuality as children of God, and our common vulnerability on this planet." That is the most valuable lesson we can learn from the past half-century of our experience. □

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Through History With J. Wesley Smith

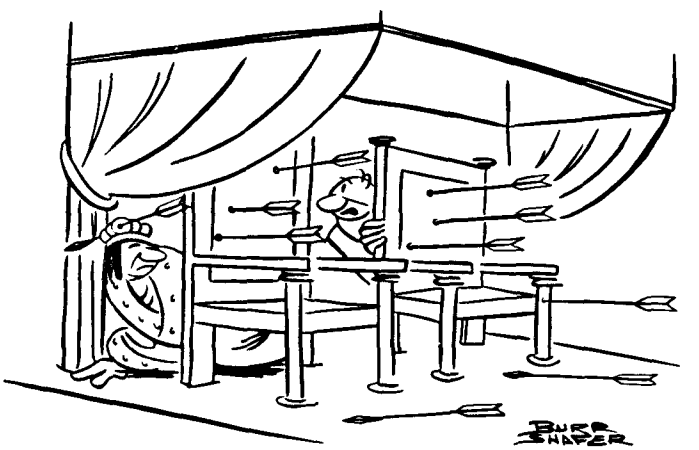
Cartoons by Burr Shafer

For two decades, starting in 1945, Burr Shafer's cartoon character J. Wesley Smith enlivened SR's pages with his irreverent rompings through great episodes in history. J. Wesley's wry observations once caused President Truman to write Shafer, "I'm very proud of the fact that I'm smart enough to get the point." Here are ten history-making samples:

Through History With J. Wesley Smith
"It is unthinkable that the citizens of Rhode Island should ever surrender their sovereignty to some central authority located way off in Philadelphia."

Through History With J. Wesley Smith
"It's called dialog, and it's much more flexible than monolog. The way it works out is—you ask me a come-on question, and I give you a smart answer."

Through History With J. Wesley Smith
"Let's row back to Norway. I couldn't stand another of these Maine winters."



Through History With J. Wesley Smith
"Why don't we form a democracy? Then we'd only have to satisfy 51 percent of the people."

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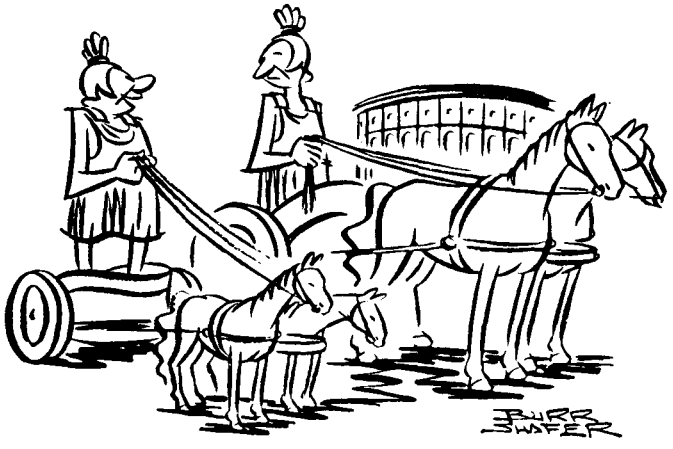
Through History With J. Wesley Smith
"Every time we conquer a country now we make them citizens. In no time a Roman will have no more status than an ordinary human being."

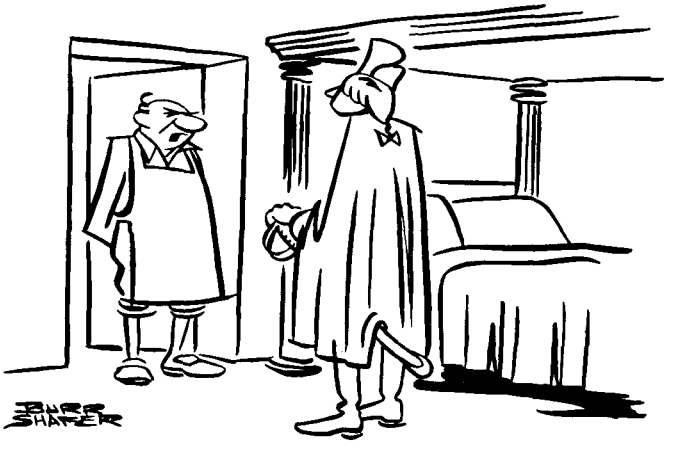
Through History With J. Wesley Smith
"Never mind why—we're moving to Florence and changing the name of the firm."

Through History With J. Wesley Smith
"It's a new kind of howling Wesley thought up. He calls it singing."

Through History With J. Wesley Smith
"Don't take chances—call the humane society people."



Through History With J. Wesley Smith
"Nothing like these foreign jobs—only half the upkeep."



Through History With J. Wesley Smith
"And if you're not out by 12 o'clock, General Washington, I'll have to charge you for another day."

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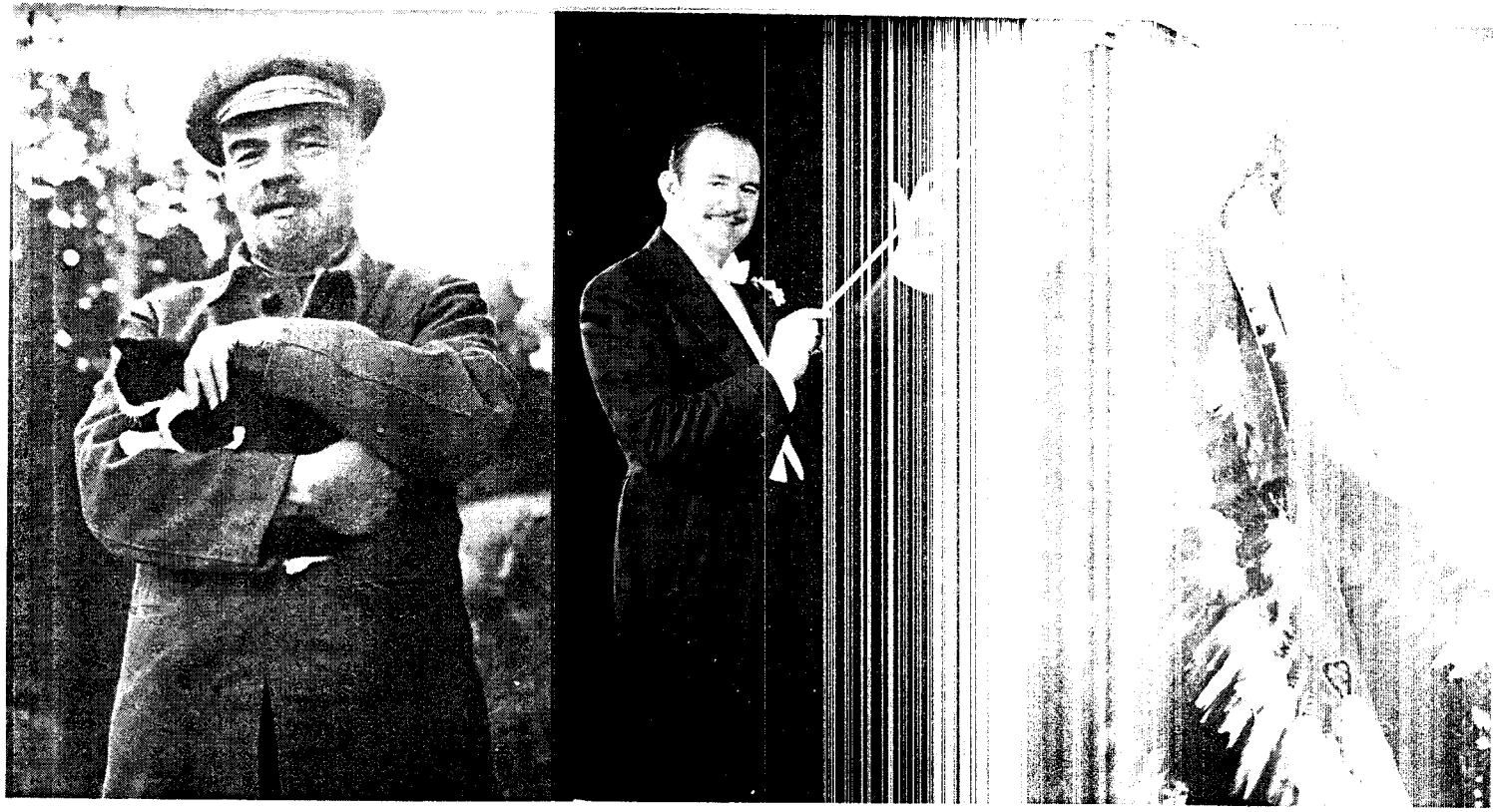

Nineteen Twenty-Four

Being a Cooke's tour of the world in the year of SR's birth.

by Alistair Cooke

In mooching through the attic of my own memories of 50 years ago, and then comparing notes with an American friend who is, give a year or two, a contemporary, it struck me that it would be well for all social historians settling down to freeze the remembrances of years past to ask themselves a simple question: in this case, Whose 1924?

My American, a close friend for the past quarter-century, was born in Hungary, brought to this country in babyhood, and reared so tenaciously in Manhattan's Washington Heights that for a long time his definition of downtown was 157th Street and he never actually discovered Times Square until his sixteenth year. His lust for baseball consumed his adolescence, and when I asked him if he remembered that Lenin died in January 1924 and that Hitler went to prison for his abortive beer-hall putsch, he said: "Lenin and Hitler? They weren't even in the New York Giants' farm system." This man, whom the reader is quite possibly fixing in his mind's eye as an aging country-club adolescent, became a boy violinist, an American vice-consul, and then a voracious if skeptical student of Marxism. He was subsequently, for 40 years, an investment banker. He has voted for only two Democrats—Al Smith and Lyndon Johnson—and is by now hardly aware that the New York Giants transferred to San Francisco. Today, as a collector of jade, he takes a dim view of the thoughts of Chairman Mao but a glowing view of the vast archaeological diggings of the Chinese in the past 25 years. He can be counted on, within minutes of the arrival of *The New York Times*, to leap on any story that concerns impeachment, the financial woes of Lockheed, the sale of a Tang camel at Christie's, or any new grip, stance, takeaway, or knee jerk recommended by Jack Nicklaus. My American's memories of 1924 do not include any knowledge of Teapot Dome or the interminable Democratic convention or Robert Frost (he won the first of his four Pulitzer prizes in that year) but swirl exclusively around a mental vortex of baseball games, which constantly throw up two towering heroes: Heinie Zimmerman and Shoeless Joe Jackson.

My own recollections of 1924 are so crowded and agreeable that I could easily outrage the reader by recounting nothing else for the rest of this piece. I think it worthwhile, however, to match my friend's reminiscences with a few of my own, if only to sharpen the point that social history is never written by that legendary "objective reporter" but always by a single human being confined more than he knows by the tether of his own experience.

Throughout 11 months of 1924, I was 15 and reveling in the new lease of life provided by my ascent into the sixth form of an English grammar school, in the seaside mecca of Blackpool. From the first form through the fifth—the age span of the American junior and senior high schools—the sexes were in the same building but sequestered at all times in separate classes. Since 15 was the school-leaving age, 95 percent of the student body took the final school examination in that year and left. The remaining students were the ones who intended to go on to the university, and the classes were so small that at last the sexes came together. In my sixth form (which is roughly the senior year in high school)

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there were five boys and eight girls, a happy ratio. The work was harder, but we were left on our own a good deal, and we were treated as grown-ups—much more, I believe, than most American *college* students. So 1924 was a magical, liberating year in which teachers turned into tutors and friends, and at least two of the girls graduated from the awkward squad into what *Time* would call nubile beauties. There were dances and musicales and much free time after hours for Ping-Pong and the first fingerings of jazz on a splendid concert grand in the large and sumptuous hall designed as a memorial for the boys—the astonishing number of boys—who had died in the First World War.

I was aiming to sit for a history scholarship at Cambridge and took as minor specialties English literature and French. So my days were taken up with reading Acton and Croce and Lecky and Gibbon and Trevelyan, and Shaw and Belloc and Chesterton and Wells and Hardy, not to mention Corneille, Racine, de Maupassant, and Victor Hugo. On week nights there were always three hours of homework. But at the weekends there was football or cricket, work on the horizontal bars in the town gymnasium, fishing for plaice and fluke off the North pier, picnicking in the rolling sandhills, and late-night sessions with jazz-smitten cronies listening, with soaring excitement through the year, to the surrender of the old Ruritanian melodies before the invading talents of Vincent Youmans and George Gershwin.

At the risk of offending the more double-domed subscribers, I must stress the historical fact that to a studious, though playful, 15-year-old English boy, 1924 was, above everything else, the birthday of American jazz. Paul Whiteman made his first conquering tour of the United Kingdom and doomed the reign of The Vagabond King. Before then, musical comedies had been lachrymose spectacles, placed in Hapsburg hamlets or the Rockies, to which well-meaning aunts dragged reluctant little boys, whom they subjected to three hours' exposure to the bawling of love-struck baritones wearing swords and stomachers or the boy scouts' hats of the Canadian Mounties. Suddenly, *No, No, Nanette!* appeared like a comet, with a saucy chorus of angels in white, one-piece bathing suits, and at the school's Christmas soirée, we danced to "I Want to Be Happy," "Tea for Two," and "You Can Dance With Any Girl at All." And there fell on our ears, for the first time, the sounds of George Gershwin. It was, to coin a phrase, the dawn of an era.

Such is the overweening pressure of the human ego that I suppose anybody's sixteenth year seems like the dawn of an era. At any rate, I am unshakably convinced that 1924 was the year of revolution in popular music. I am also convinced—and my conviction has been reinforced by memories of the superb draftsmen then being employed by *Punch*—that 1924 saw the arrival of the Charleston, "listening-in" (the BBC), shingled hair, and a caterwauling festival known as "community singing." It was the year of the first, and as it happened the last, British Empire Exhibition, to which my father took me, on my first trip to London, to goggle at oddly garbed Fuzzy-Wuzzies who claimed (and later were to press the claim) that they were British subjects.

There were, in my recollection, only four Americans who impinged on our consciousness during that year. One was a fisherman named Coolidge, rumored by the history master to be the sitting President of the United States. Walter Hagen, a sleek and devil-may-care golfer who won the British Open and had the breathtaking gall to say to the Prince of Wales, "Hold the flag, David." Irving Berlin, whose love-sick waltz "All Alone" was said to have been composed as an SOS to his beloved after she had been whisked across the Atlantic by her heartless father, a "captain of industry" who did not propose to muddy his bloodline with the son of an immigrant rabbi.

Photos *(left to right)*: Lenin (Culver); Paul Whiteman (Movie Star News); Calvin Coolidge (UPI); Irving Berlin (Culver); Al Smith (UPI); Loeb and Leopold (Wide World).

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And one Gen. Charles G. Dawes, a financial wizard able not only to present to the Germans a reparations bill that would guarantee the bankruptcy of the new republic and the triumph of Hitler but also to calculate the ability of Great Britain to repay her wartime loans from the United States at 3 percent rising to 3.5 for 62 years exactly. Since Great Britain still owes $7.3 billion, it seems in retrospect that General Dawes misjudged by several centuries the date of Britain's discharge.

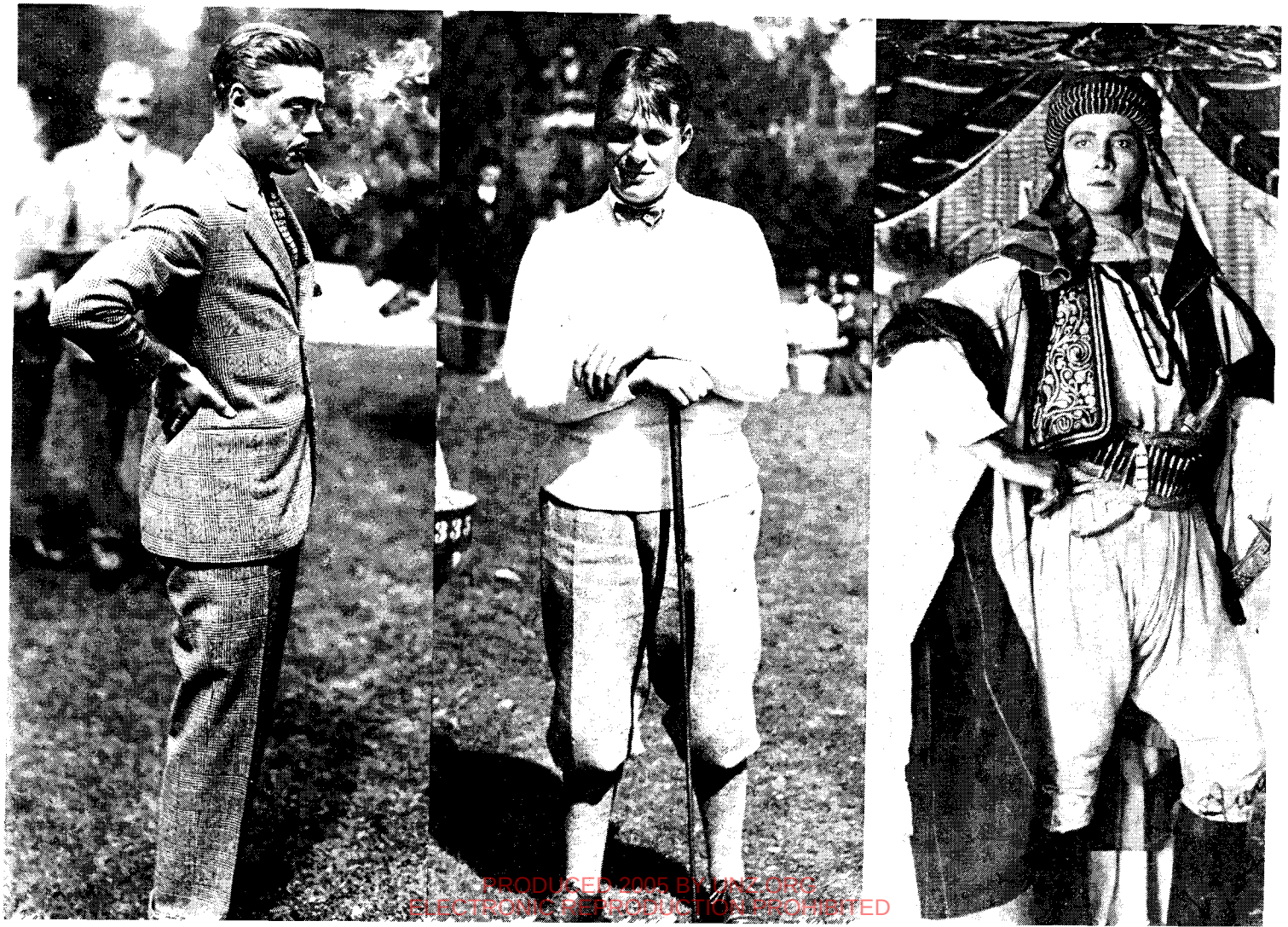
THIS MORSEL of comparative sociology will demonstrate, I hope, that there is no such thing as Everyman's 1924 and that what follows is more a catalog of surprising and forgotten coincidences than the record of any human experience. I take no stock in the traditional notion, so dear to Ph.D. candidates, that the period or the year they pick upon, for their mole-like researches, is a newfound historical watershed. In my schooldays it was required gospel that 1453 saw the start of modern history. I have since guessed that where I was born—Manchester, originally *Mancunium*—we should have been too exercised over the discovery of a new roof-thatching technique, or the appointment of a bishop, to notice the fall of Constantinople.

If, then, you happened to be, in 1924, that voracious newspaper reader, the mythical "well-informed man," you would hardly have failed to notice a sequence of disasters, festivals, scandals, and novelties that began on the first day of January with one of those heroic experiments in law enforcement for which the United States is justly famous. The President of the United States (who was, indeed, that same fisherman, Coolidge) granted special leave to a brigadier general of the Marine Corps to become Philadelphia's first "director of public safety." Philadelphia was notoriously slack about enforcing the Prohibition laws, and General Butler, deriding the failure of civic reformers, lined up the city cops and shouted: "Good God Almighty, let's do the damned thing ourselves. Hell! Put on your uniforms and go after 'em." The general's methods were too melodramatic for the local citizenry, but it can be held that his fatal delusion was the belief that uniformed cops are appointed to enforce laws. The President accordingly instructed him, 20 months later, to return to the Marine Corps.

Toward the end of the month, the happy whirlwind of a sigh blew across the United States when it was reported, from a village near Moscow, that the frenzied leader of the Bolshevik Revolution had died, at the age of 54, appropriately of apoplexy.

February came in with another high-minded item, which could probably be repeated in less gullible form any and every year since. A quondam college president, one Charles Herbert Levermore, won the Bok Peace Prize with a plan, since sunk into oblivion, for preserving the peace of the world. He received $50,000 as a down payment and was to pick up another $50,000 whenever his plan was "accepted by Congress

Photos *(left to right)*: Duke of Windsor (UPI); Robert ("Bobby") Tyre Jones, Jr. (Wide World); Rudolph Valentino (Movie Star News).



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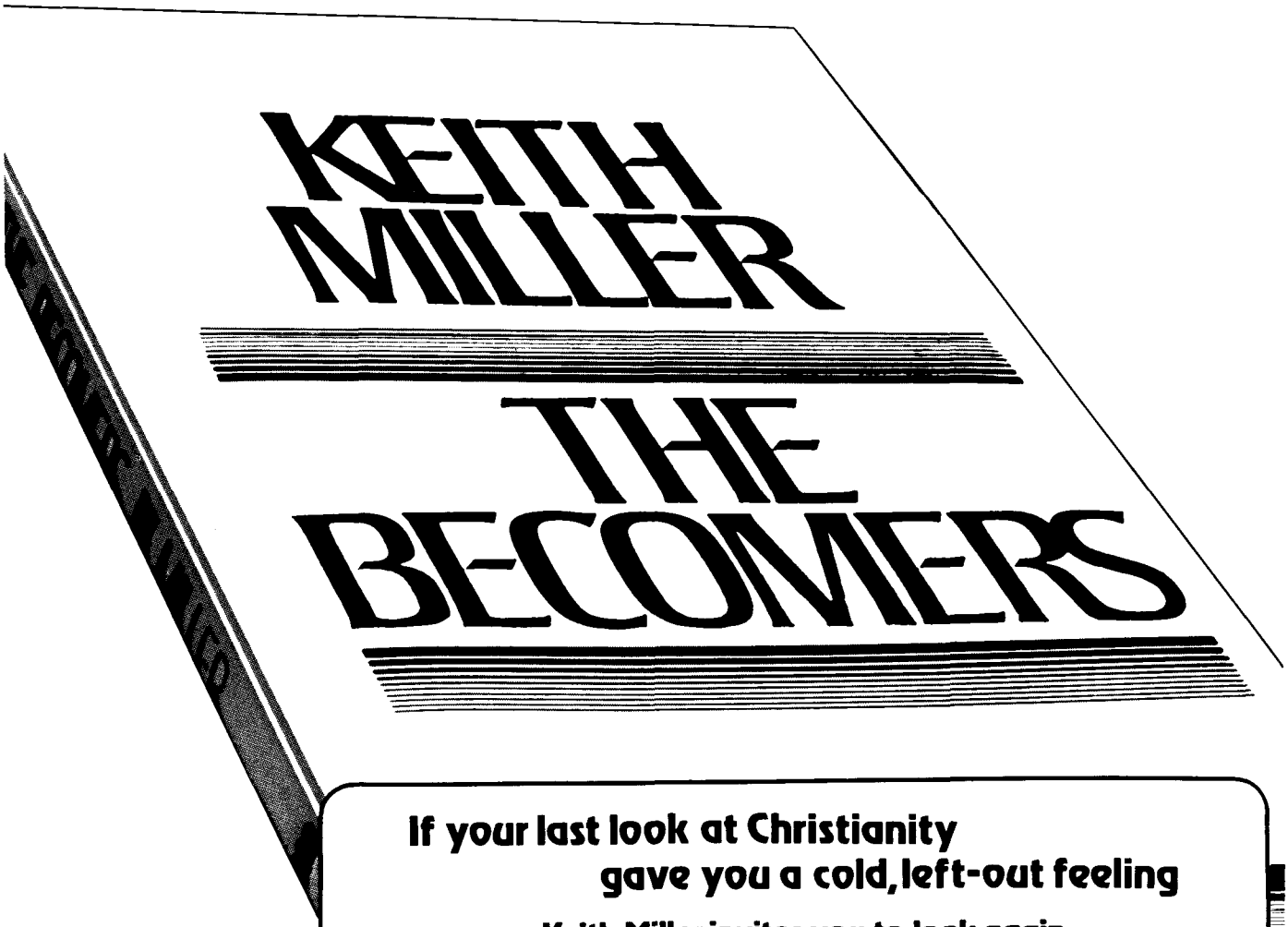

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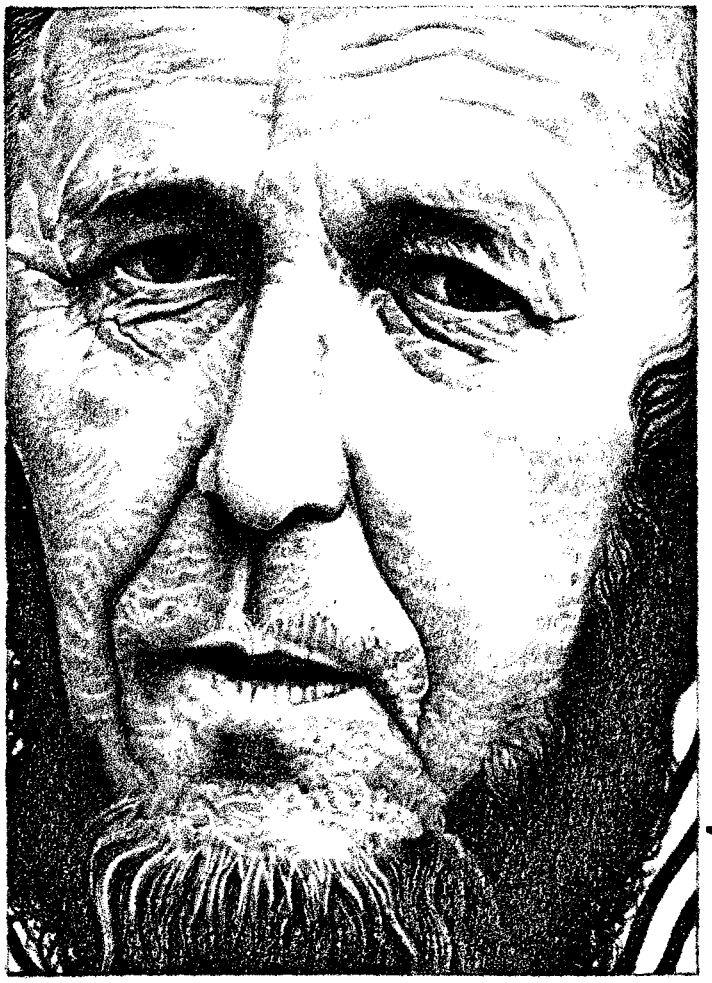

What do Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, Golda Meir, Elliot Richardson, Woody Allen, Hannah Arendt, Chou En-Lai, Margaret Mead, Alistair Cooke, Leonard Bernstein, Kingsley Amis, Gerald R. Ford and Studs Terkel all have in common?

They all had something to say on

THE NEW YORK TIMES OP-ED PAGE

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Photos *(left to right)*: Harold Lloyd (Movie Star News); Katharine Cornell (Culver); Douglas Fairbanks (Movie Star News).

or endorsed by the American people." There is no record of the acceptance of the plan or of any national referendum, and presumably the second $50,000 is still in escrow.

On February 18, the almanacs blankly state, "Secretary of the Navy Edwin L. Denby resigned." There was much more in this action than met the typesetter's eye. Denby was one of those massively handsome, bull-like males who seemed to flourish after the prototype had been laid down by Warren Gamaliel Harding, as the Gibson Girl had been conjured into life by the artist's pen. Mark Sullivan said of Denby that "Nature, after giving him features that would have fitted a Bismarck, had neglected to fill the space behind the features with Bismarck material." It was charitably maintained that Denby resigned because, as a chronicler of the Teapot Dome scandal wrote, "he was ludicrously unfit for the post." But because of his rumored part in the secret leasing of government oil reserves, for which Harding's Secretary of the Interior received a discreet $100,000 bribe, Denby was threatened with impeachment by the House. The Senate voted to instruct Coolidge to dismiss him, a breach of "executive privilege" that the President flatly refused to countenance. So Denby was "allowed" to resign. It was only the first of a parade of resignations, indictments, and actual jail sentences that pursued the panicky survivors of the Harding administration throughout 1924. Indeed, any visitor to the United States who lived here during that year could have opened his newspaper most mornings, between January and December, and said what a British diplomatic correspondent exclaimed on his first visit during the rackets prosecutions in New York of 1938: "Someone always seems to be being in-*dickted* in this country."

For by 1924, the Senate investigation into the oil scandals was well underway, under the whip of a second-generation Irish-American from Montana, Sen. Thomas J. Walsh. The testimony piled up and grew to be just as complicated and wearisome as the Watergate story. It ranged from the disclosure of tax records and the double-entry machinations of oil companies to the suicide or possible murder of the Attorney General's closest friend, from open bribes to "blind" payments to a ranch manager, from cables in a comical code devised by the Secretary of the Treasury to the fateful question of whether a telephone conversation about "six or eight cows" could possibly be (it was) a mis-hearing of "sixty-eight thou." In the beginning Senator Walsh and his sanitation crew were national heroes. But by the fall the public was bewildered, and the business world interpreted the Senate's reforming zeal as an unpatriotic exercise in rocking the boat, if not an actual wrecking operation contrived by the Communists. And the press turned on Walsh—the Daniel come to judgment—as a busybody and malodorous muckraker. He and his committee members were denounced, by a spiritual sire of the Agnew speech-writers, as "a poison-tongued partnership of twittering hysteria."

In March the fall of the franc was majestically redeemed by a $100 million credit made available to the Bank of France by J. P. Morgan and Company. The Senate passed a $2 billion bill to pay for 20-year endowment insurance policies for the veterans of the First World War.

In April the dean of Columbia University Law School was appointed to succeed the disgraced attorney general, Harry M. Daugherty. A small Pennsylvania town was invaded by 500 men in the white robes of the Ku Klux Klan, and two of the townspeople were killed. Sen. Burton K. Wheeler of Montana was indicted—and subsequently set free—on a charge of receiving money to influence the peddling of oil-prospecting permits. And Gov. Alfred E. Smith of New York announced himself as a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination. The Japanese ambassador protested against a move to restrict Japanese immigration. The following month both Houses, by a roaring majority, moved to reduce drastically the quota of all immigrant aliens and proclaimed, in the words of the Baltimore *Sun*, that "no longer is the foreigner a welcome fugitive from the . . oppression of the Old World."

On May 21, late in the afternoon, a 13-year-old schoolboy, the son of a Chicago millionaire real-estate man, stopped on his way home to watch a ball game. A car drove up and carried him away. The following day a special delivery letter assured the parents that the boy was safe but asked for a $10,000 ransom, to be collected in worn bills and put in a cigar box. The father duly obliged and drove off to the specified meeting place. Quite incredibly, he forgot the instructions about where he was to go, and he drove back home. It would have been too late anyway. That morning a laborer found the naked corpse of

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"If all of Harding's malefactors could be resurrected and asked for a comment on 1974, they might well be content to sigh in concert: Ah—So."

the boy near a railroad right-of-way. Nearby was a pair of shell-rimmed spectacles. They were the crucial clue that led to the arrest, and subsequent conviction, of two young men, both the sons of millionaires, both brilliant and already, at 19, both post-graduate students at the University of Chicago. In September the two men, Nathan Leopold, Jr., and Richard Loeb, were sentenced to life imprisonment.

In June, shortly after the authors of *Middletown* had discovered that half the working class of their average American town had cars (while only one in five had bathtubs), Henry Ford's assumed monopoly of the automobile industry was rudely shaken by the news that for the first time the sales of Chevrolets had surpassed those of Fords. The unsinkable Henry promptly began to scrap his Model T and cryptically announced the coming of a new car, which emerged three years later as the Model A.

Throughout the burning summer, the sweet music of the Coolidge prosperity was jarred by harsh evidence of a widespread recession that was tumbling the prices of the farmers and the shoe and textile manufacturers. But nothing could give pause to the stampede for refrigerators and radio sets. In July the country experienced a bout of "participatory democracy," long before the ghastly phrase was invented, in the broadcasting of what H. L. Mencken called "the incomparable nine-ring circus" of the Democratic National Convention. It was held in New York's Madison Square Garden, and it is very unlikely that the convention system will ever again see such an orgy of indecisive balloting. For ten sweaty days and nights, the Democrats labored to find their Moses. Not until the eighty-sixth ballot did Al Smith pass Wilson's "Crown Prince," William Gibbs McAdoo. Smith, on a memorable morning, retired with the more pious of his delegates and alternates to seek divine help at St. Patrick's Cathedral. But the Lord was evidently out to lunch, for though McAdoo rose again, on the one hundred and second ballot, they both collapsed, and on the one hundred and third, the savior of the party was discovered to be an amiable Wall Street lawyer, a Virginian named John W. Davis. This prolonged, and nationally broadcast, demonstration of the pitiful divisions among the Democrats was enough to ensure a Coolidge landslide in November.

In August an American automobile proved something or other by traversing the route of the Exodus, across the Sinai Desert, in 1/87,600th of the time the Israelites took. Sen. George Norris of Nebraska first urged the government to override private power interests and take over the dams and powerhouses of Muscle Shoals, Ala. (this it did in 1933). The Prince of Wales began his second safari into the United States.

In September America's king of the turf, one Edward F. Geers, fell from his horse and was killed. In Ardmore, Pa., Robert ("Bobby") Tyre Jones, Jr., won the national amateur golf tournament and began a conquering stretch of the world's championships, which ended with his retirement, still an amateur, six years later. His record of 13 major tournaments was not surpassed until 1973, by Jack William Nicklaus.

In October the Internal Revenue Bureau opened its records and disclosed the baffling fact that whereas John D. Rockefeller, Sr., had paid only $124,266 in taxes, his son had paid $7,435,169.

As the year came to a close, so did the lives of Sen. Henry Cabot Lodge, the invincible opponent of the League of Nations; Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett, the author of *Little Lord Fauntleroy;* and Samuel Gompers, the father of American labor, whose only surviving doctrine is his prejudice against the formation of a political labor party. Flickering but recognizable photographs of President Coolidge and the Prince of Wales were transmitted between London and New York.

THIS WAS THE YEAR of the "well-informed man." For others to whom literature was more important than politics, it was, for instance, the year of Joseph Hergesheimer's *Balisand,* of Louis Bromfield's *The Green Bay Tree,* of Edna Ferber's Pulitzer Prize–winning *So Big,* and also of Michael Arlen's *The Green Hat,* an enormously profitable trifle about Mayfair bedmates that caused the English critic James Agate to feel inclined "to liken Mr. Arlen's world to a deer forest in the rutting season, were it not that the stag is a noble animal."

For the mass of Americans, who were now going to the movies more than once a week, it was the year of Douglas Fairbanks in *The Thief of Bagdad,* of Valentino as *Monsieur Beaucaire,* of Harold Lloyd being *Girl Shy.* And for the considerable metropolitan minority that still regarded the movies as a debased form of theater, the year was memorable for Lady Diana Manners as the Madonna in Reinhardt's *The Miracle,* for *The Outsider* with Katharine Cornell, and for the four Marx brothers in *I'll Say She Is.*

But if there is a special flavor about 1924, it is in the nostril of the sniffer. Otherwise, and under the aspect of eternity, 1924 does not seem to have been very different from 1974. The United States trod its well-worn grooves and pursued its destiny in its own inimitable fashion. There were brave, and ultimately doomed, experiments to embrace various cities in a cocoon of law and order. Rousing plans were hatched to procure the perpetual peace of the world. There was a murderous riot. One Senator was wounded in a street brawl, and another was indicted. An Attorney General resigned in disgrace. A former deputy director of the FBI went off to the penitentiary. The first female governor of a state, Miriam "Ma" Ferguson of Texas, heralded the coming "equal age of women." The Internal Revenue Bureau published the income-tax returns of the well-heeled, and some payments were considerably less than the public thought proper. There was an atrocious kidnapping. And there was a full-blown Senate investigation into the corruption of a Republican administration, which first excited the people and then bored them, and abandoned Senator Walsh, like Senator Ervin, as a John the Baptist whose excess of piety reduced him to no other fate than a retreat into the wilderness.

Looking back seven years later on 1924, Frederick Lewis Allen wrote: "The Harding Administration was responsible in its short two years and five months for more concentrated robbery and rascality than any other in the whole history of the federal government." If all of Harding's malefactors could be resurrected and asked for a comment on 1974, they might well be content to sigh in concert: Ah—So. □

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Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Months before Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* appeared in the U.S., George F. Kennan, working from the Russian edition published in Paris, analyzed for *New York Review* readers the far-reaching significance of this relentless work that cannot but have a "major effect on the Soviet regime."

Lenny Bruce

Jack Richardson reviews the new biography *Ladies and Gentlemen—Lenny Bruce!* by Albert Goldman and wonders "Who would have thought that there would be a time when Lenny Bruce and Richard Nixon might be linked together, not as implacable adversaries, but as victims of our society's verbal taboos?"

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Ernest Hemingway in Africa—Moral style to stay the inner floods of panic.

Literature of the Latecomers: A View of the Twenties

The writers of our second great literary period speak to us more powerfully than ever.

by Irving Howe

Except for patriots and scholars, there really is no major American literature before the 1830s. At that point began the "American Renaissance," our first great literary period, in which writers like Emerson, Whitman, and the early Melville proclaimed that in America paradise had not exactly been found —for they had, after all, eyes with which to see—but was a state of being within our common reach, a possibility to be won through the exercise and the purification of the individual will.

The myth inspiring these writers was that of a new start for humanity in the sacred emptiness of American space, a leap past the blood and chaos of European history. Not a good society, but a transcendence of social bonds; not a community of citizens, but a fraternal huddle seldom consisting of more than two persons—I, the self-created individual, the man or boy lustered through a direct intuition of godhead, and you, my amiable friend, sharing the pleasures of an unsullied nature—this was the commanding vision of nineteenth-century American literature.

What was being imaginatively summoned here was not merely a male fraternity, a miniature secret society at a distance from social rank, family bonds, and female demands. It was also a benign anarchist utopia, a gathering of friends on a raft or in the woods or out at sea that would shake off the paltry calculations of good and evil and would thrive freely beyond the reach of the State or the constraints of authority. Every man would declare himself a pioneer of spirit, with a stake in the geography of transcendence or in what Emerson called the Oversoul. Every man would make himself anew, defining his character through a relentless flux, as if Adam never fell and Cain's progeny did not settle in Europe and Asia.

Having reached its first rich bloom in the nineteenth century, the American imagination is incorrigibly romantic. So it has always been; so, probably, it will always be. But our romanticism is different from that of Europe. In its social innocence, ours supposes that a state of communal ecstasy (a runaway slave and a black boy, an alienated sailor and his brown friend) can replace the here-and-now of mundane or social politics; this illusion having burst, as it must, our writers fall into that bleakness of heart graying the late work of Twain and Melville. And American romanticism differs from that of Europe in that it retains strong alloys of Puritan moralism, so that in the work of a novelist like Henry James there is a complex interlocking between the desire for individual release and the memory of inexorable norms. But with whatever complications, the native American strain is romanticism, a soaring of ideal expectations, a faith in personal beatitude.

Our second great literary period came in the Twenties, when American writing broke out of its brilliant self-absorption, collided with the weight of Europe, and proclaimed the hope for a new paradise —F. Scott Fitzgerald's "orgiastic future that year by year recedes"—to be forever lost and perhaps well worth the losing. The deep, if unspoken, kinship that the writers of the Twenties established with their nineteenth-century forebears was that of simultaneously celebrating once again the pastoral vision of anarchic bliss (Hemingway with Nick Adams at the big, two-hearted river, Fitzgerald through Gatsby's green light, Faulkner with the grave rituals of returning to the woods) and ruthlessly assaulting that vision, as if to announce that in anarchy, even the mildest Emersonian variant, there can be no bliss. The individual will, so imperiously exalted a century earlier, now became an agent of malaise and overreaching. (Melville, it is true, had already recognized as much in his conception of Captain Ahab, but it seems

Irving Howe, eminent author and critic, is editor of Dissent *magazine.*

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at least arguable that Ahab so dominates *Moby Dick*, as Hester Prynne does *The Scarlet Letter*, that the final thrust of the book is a re-assertion of Promethean romanticism, the dominion of the unbowed will, at no matter what cost.)

Reading again some of the major writers of the Twenties—Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Stevens, Cummings, Williams, and a bit later, even Faulkner—one is struck by the sheer omnipresence, the exasperating inescapability, of Ralph Waldo Emerson. He haunts the American premises. He is both influence accepted and influence denied. Our wicked lamb, he has left his mark on every major American writer with the possible exception of Edith Wharton. (Even Theodore Dreiser, supposedly a mechanistic determinist, speaks in the Emersonian vein, bringing into play "a mystic something of beauty that perennially transfigures the world.") Over and over again one hears echoes of Emerson's call for the self-reliant man, follower of instinct and conscience (the two, implausibly, not very distinct in his writing) —over and over again, echoes of his romanticism asserting the godly blessedness of human reach. Imagine the outrage of this idea, possible only to America, that a relentless infinitude of will, emerging from a direct tie with godhead, should appear in our writing as a category of innocence! Captain Ahab is Emerson's dark nephew, and Jay Gatsby is his descendant along a bastard line, grandson of an illicit union between the Faustian romanticism of the New England philosopher and the acquisitiveness of the American bourgeois.

THE AMERICAN WRITERS of the Twenties saw themselves as latecomers. (I wrench this term from Harold Bloom's book on literary influence.) They were latecomers in relation to the American experience, no longer able to draw full sustenance from its controlling myths and symbols; they were latecomers in relation to the great nineteenth-century American writers, receiving fragments of their world view but without much faith or confidence. (In Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, the American dream becomes Jake Barnes's nightmare, forcing him to sleep with the light on; in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, it becomes the monomania of Jay Gatsby, dragging him to a sordid death.) And the writers of the Twenties were latecomers in relation to cultural modernism, which had by then revolutionized

Courtesy Mrs. Scottie Fitzgerald Smith, from *The Romantic Egoists* (Scribner's), to be published this fall.
F. Scott Fitzgerald in France—A quest for glamour with visions of grace.

European culture and demanded from them journeys, literal or symbolic, to Paris and Berlin.

For the first time American literature took on an international cast, not merely in its settings and references (as in Eliot's *The Waste Land*, which set the tone for the age) but also, more deeply, in its major line of vision. Fitzgerald, Hemingway, and Cummings (in *The Enormous Room*) brought to our writing a tacit denial of the whole premise of American destiny, resisting sadly or sourly the idea that the New World represents mankind's second chance—even as they remained enthralled by the charm and pathos of that notion. Europe broke into the consciousness of our writers as never before: Europe as the war, as history suddenly encountered, as heritage of human failure, as idea of social limitation. And once Europe had left its scar, our literature could never again yield so wistfully to the idyll of Huck's raft and Natty Bumppo's wilderness; it could never recapture the buoyancy of Emerson and Whitman.

The latecomer was, by necessity, a writer of self-consciousness. He struggled with fragments of conviction, he wrestled with a heritage of powerful ancestors, he could neither fully retain nor fully reject the seemingly assured values of an earlier moment. The phrase "crisis of values" has by now become a cliché that makes us wince when we hear it, but it also points to the deepest realities of our epoch. For the writers of the Twenties, this crisis was no longer a problem, certainly not a discovery, since all that it signified was simply taken for granted. What *was* a problem was how to live and work after that crisis had registered in our awareness.

A vivid account of the tone of the Twenties comes from John Peale Bishop, the poet-critic who was a friend of both Fitzgerald and Edmund Wilson. In his essay "The Missing All"—the title is from an Emily Dickinson poem that begins, "The missing All prevented me/From missing minor things"—Bishop describes how the young literary men returning from the First World War felt they had been cheated not only of time and health but also of truth and honor. They formed "really the first literary generation in America. There had been groups before, but they were not united by a communion of youth, a sense of experience shared and enemies encountered. . . ." They felt themselves

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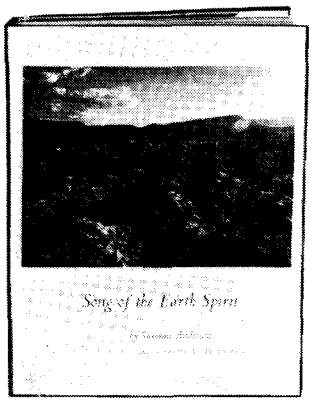

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cut off from all who held power and spoke with voices of authority.

The most tragic thing [continues Bishop] about the war was not that it made so many dead men, but that it destroyed the tragedy of death. Not only did the young suffer in the war, but [so did] every abstraction that would have sustained and given dignity to their suffering. The war made the traditional morality inacceptable . . . so that at its end the survivors were left to face, as they could, a world without values.

Yet in facing that world, they remained, whether they acknowledged the debt or not, the spiritual grandsons of Emerson, Whitman, Twain, and Melville. The old American yearnings were still there, if only to exacerbate the sense of deracination and pain that informs the writing of the Twenties. And few things are likely to be more disturbing to a sensitive mind than a heritage of high romantic idealism that cannot be released except through anxieties of negation.

For writers like Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Cummings, and the early Dos Passos, there could no longer be a question of clinging to traditional values. Nor could there even be a question of trying to find "new" values. These writers knew it was their lot to spend their lives in uncertainty, and the problem that obsessed them was how to do this without violating their feelings—their deeply American, their finely inherited, feelings—about courage and dignity. They saw their task as a defensive one: the preservation of residual decencies even when they could not quite provide sufficient reasons for wishing to preserve them.

Writers burdened with this order of consciousness are likely to become fanatically protective toward language: it is their last line of defense. No other group of American poets and novelists has ever been so concerned as that of the Twenties—and here the influence of European modernism was decisive—with keeping alive the undefiled word. For Hemingway especially, the bare word, in its denotative scrupulousness, became a fortress of the self. Fitzgerald took greater chances with language, risking passages of high poetic generality: they reveal him, in falsity and wisdom, like a pure mirror. Cummings in his ragged poeticizing, Williams in his modest phrasing, Dos Passos in his early Joycean play: for all such writers language became not merely the substance of craft but also a sign of honor.

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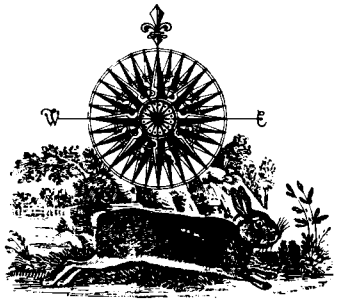

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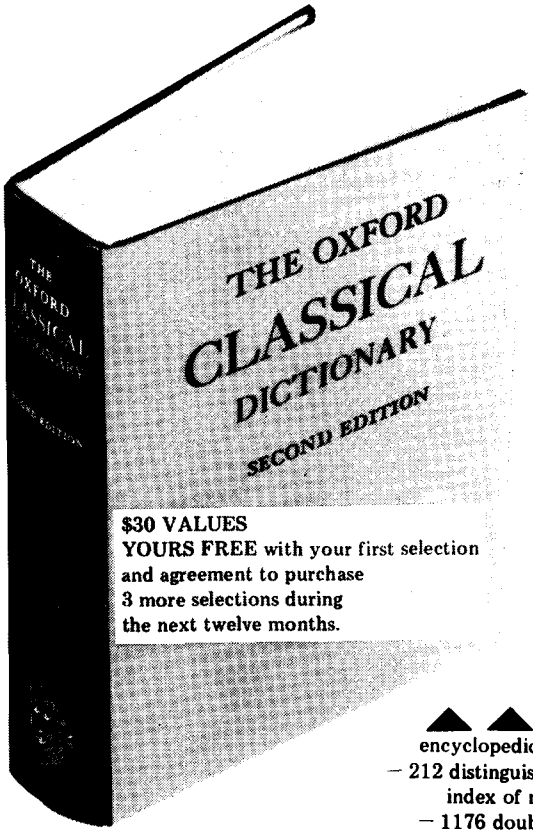

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and pretense—this was now a sacred obligation. And an obligation that soon passed from language to behavior. If you lack a structure of moral belief yet are sensitive to the need for moral perception, then what you will look for is something I have elsewhere called

a moral style . . . a series of gestures and rituals made to serve as a substitute for a moral outlook that could no longer be summoned; or a fragmentary code of behavior by which to survive decently, as if there were—the drama consisting in the fact that there is not—a secure morality behind it. The search for a moral style, which I take to be fundamental to the best American writing between World War I and the depression, is a search undertaken by men who have learned that a life constricted to the standard of *faute de mieux* can still be a rigorous, even an exalted, obligation.

No American writer felt this obligation more fiercely than did Hemingway, and for two or three decades he was probably the most influential novelist in the Western world, embodying its malaise and anguish in fictions of repressed candor. Now, 20 or so years later, one finds that students no longer respond to his fiction, certainly not with that surge of identification that I recall from my youth; they cannot see what "all the fuss is about" in *The Sun Also Rises*, and they suspect its characters of self-dramatization. Well, such faults do mar the best of Hemingway's work, as they overrun the worst of it, but what younger readers often fail to detect is the moral context, the whole structure of feeling, from which Hemingway writes. They fail to grasp the terms of desperation informing the conduct of his characters; and suddenly—how astonishing—the most translucent of American stylists has come to seem *obscure*.

But it takes only a modest quantity of historical imagination to see that Hemingway was evoking the "essence" of the modern experience through fables of violence that had their settings in Africa and Europe. The characteristic Hemingway hero—wounded but bearing his wound in silence, sensitive but scorning to devalue his feelings through rhetoric, defeated but finding a remnant of dignity in an honest confrontation of defeat—signifies the deracination of twentieth-century life, now felt to be so extreme that there is nothing to do but find a psychic shelter of one's own, a place in which to make a last stand. But a last stand: not a rout.

All of Hemingway's stories and novels can be read as efforts to find improvised gestures and surrogate codes—what I

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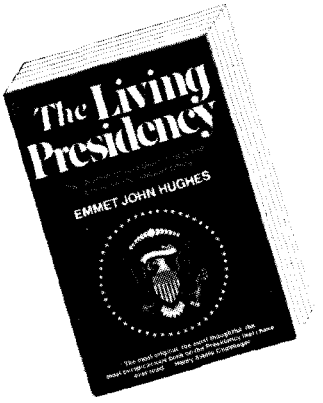

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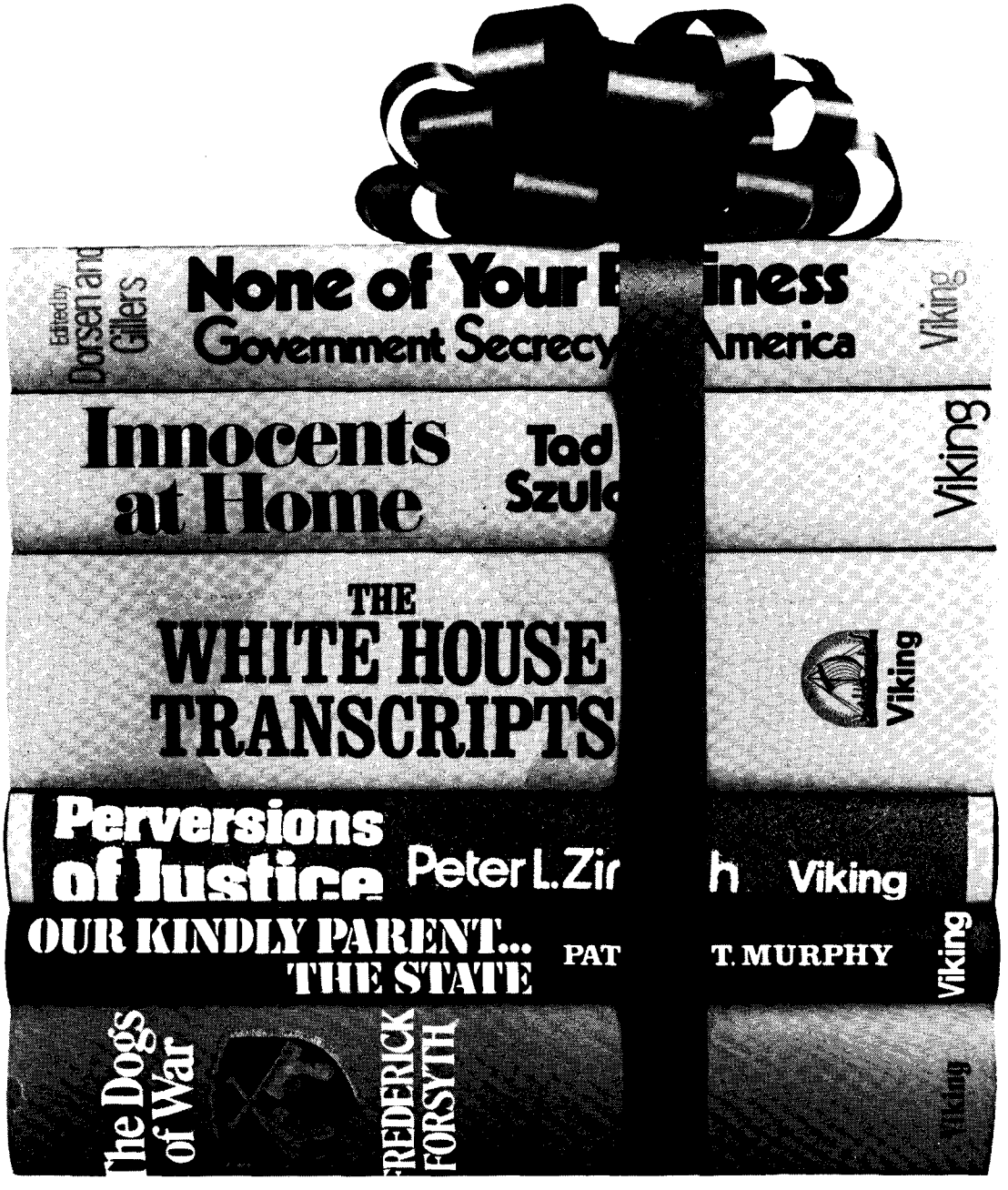

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have called a moral style—for the good, the true, and the heroic—or, that failing, at least for not yielding to the inner floods of panic. Hemingway struck to the heart of modern nihilism through stories about people who have come to the end of the line. Nick Adams, Jake Barnes, Lady Brett, Frederick Henry, and then the prizefighters, matadors, rich Americans, and failed writers: all are at the brink, almost ready to surrender yet holding on to whatever fragment of morale they can. The compulsive stylization of Hemingway's prose was a way of letting the language tense and retense, so as to form a barrier or a dike against the panic that had taken hold of his characters. Finally, Hemingway's best work comes to seem an incitement to resistance and renewal through the frugal postures of moral style.

WHAT HEMINGWAY tried to do through his code of behavior, Fitzgerald tried to reach through visions of grace. Fitzgerald understood instinctively that romanticism is the American fate. No matter how the American writer regards romanticism, he must steadily confront its premises. Being a latecomer, Fitzgerald could not, like Melville, enfranchise his romanticism through heroic figures larger than life or through epic narratives larger than novels; he had to cage his romanticism in the deflated wisdom of Nick Carraway, the narrator of *The Great Gatsby*; but it was the mark of Fitzgerald's seriousness that at no point can we suppose the cage to be greater than the beast trapped within it.

A Fitzgerald critic, Milton Hindus, has written that "Fitzgerald's trouble is that, like so many extreme romantics, he vacillated between two contrary views. He wanted to lead the good life from a spiritual point of view in the desert of worldly values where it was quite certain in advance that it could not be led." The remark is priceless in its thorough misunderstanding. For the desire that Mr. Hindus attributes to Fitzgerald is a desire animating such classic European novels as *Great Expectations, The Red and the Black,* and *Lost Illusions.* Still more, it is the story of every young man (and, increasingly, young woman) who stands at the threshold of modern life, drawn to the goods of the world but held back by the spirit of good.

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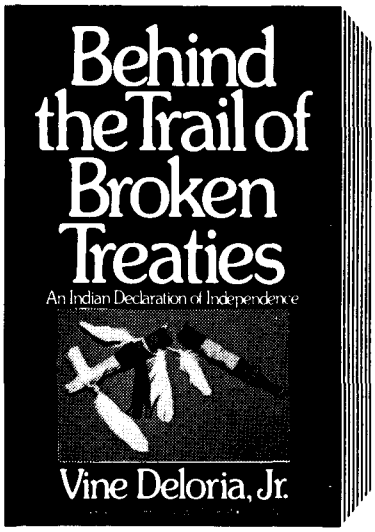

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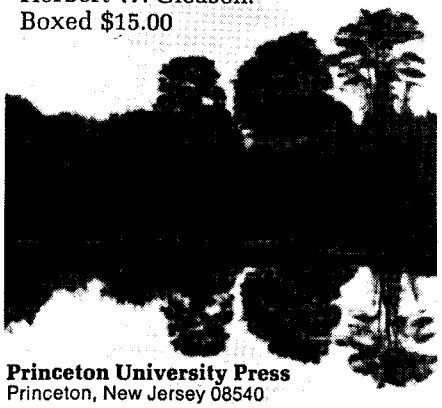

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A Doctor of OSTEOPATHY Claims He Has Perfected

A PROVEN NEW HOME CURE FOR ARTHRITIS!

EXPECT A MIRACLE OF FREEDOM FROM PAIN . . . NEW FREEDOM OF MOTION . . . IMMEDIATE . . . COMPLETE AND PERMANENT CURE POSSIBLE . . . BONE DAMAGE HEALED . . . ALL THIS CAN BE EXPECTED — W. *Campbell*, D.O.

Here's thrilling news about a Doctor's Proven New Home CURE FOR ARTHRITIS! Based on the result of hundreds of successfully treated cases, this cure is now available for the first time in a new book!

Yes! Dr. Giraud Campbell states flatly that YOU CAN BE CURED of this previously incurable disease at home, right "in your own home at no expense."

Expect a miracle, he says, because Arthritis can be cured! All types of arthritis. Complete and permanent cure is possible! With this method, he says, pain and swelling disappear — almost overnight! Even bone structure **can be** returned to normal. It's safe, easy, and effective!

Expect A Miracle Of Freedom From Pain

What has this method done for Dr. Campbell's patients? He reports:

- "It has not mattered whether these patients were old or young."
- "It has not mattered in what part of the body they had arthritis."
- "It has not mattered whether the doctor who referred them to me said it was caused by an infection, or what type of arthritis they had."
- It has not mattered whether they were still getting around or whether they were bedridden."
- "It has not mattered for how long they had arthritis."

"Their arthritis was cured," he states flatly, "and yours can be, too!" There is just one exception. "I confess right here and now that I cannot help those who have had extensive gold treatments, and who have undergone blood changes because of extended drug or chemical treatment," he says.

However, while no one can guarantee relief or cure in such cases, Dr. Campbell's files are filled with case histories of people who **have** obtained relief even after drug therapy. In addition, he says he has achieved rapid relief and repair of spinal arthritis if caught within the first five years — after which he can offer only relief of pain and no further damage. Still a spectacular hope for any sufferer! Even the agony of weather changes can be a thing of the past!

In all other cases — for arthritis of the fingers, shoulders, hips, or knees, for osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, or any other kind of arthritis . . .

"Its Like Being Born Again"

"To me the case histories of cures follow the same definite pattern," says Dr. Campbell. "A 75-year-old man suffers the pain of acute rheumatoid arthritis in all joints. He is bedridden. In one week the pain is gone. In two weeks he is ambulatory. (That is, he can walk.) In three weeks his deformed fingers straighten enough to hold the steering wheel and drive the car."

Never before has a CURE been offered. Doctors could only offer partial relief. Dr. Campbell says his method offers—not only relief—but an end to the condition: Age is no barrier . . . legs . . . backs . . . hips . . . fingers . . . knees . . . are healed.

"It's like being born again," said a 62-year-old woman patient, "I feel like I am starting a new life." It happens to him . . . It happens to her . . . It can happen to you . . . whatever your age," says Dr. Campbell.

"The Seven-Day Program To End Pain And Regain Normal Use Of Joints"

"My files are filled with cases that read like miracles," says Dr. Campbell. "A mother, bedridden for months due to arthritis, does housework again. An engineer, on crutches for a year tosses them aside . . . A grandmother, previously crippled by arthritis, discards use of her wheelchair . . .

"To me as a doctor it's a trite ending. I see it every day," says Dr. Campbell. "To others it's a miracle." That miracle is the 3-part Home Cure he has perfected.

"It's fast, safe, and effective. "The home arthritis cure," says Dr. Campbell, "begins to show benefits immediately."

- You need not wait two or three months . . . two weeks . . . two days to begin to feel the improvement, says Dr. Campbell . . .

The results are immediate and magnificent, he states. The first step is Dr. Campbell's special Arthritis-Cure Diet. "This diet is the main factor in the cure of arthritis." In fact, he says, "You might expect a cure without doing another blessed thing!"

Easy To Use!

Best of all, the one outstanding feature of this method is: NO PREPARATION IS NEEDED! It's "No-Cook Cooking" all the way! All you really need is a refrigerator, knife, or blender in most cases. All foods on the Arthritis-Cure Diet can be easily obtained, at no extra expense.

You can still eat many of your favorite foods (by actual count, there are 160 items that you can still eat . . . and you can mix nearly endless varieties) . . . you can still enjoy black eye peas, green peppers, lima beans, corn, rice, turkey, duck, fish, apples, bananas, pears, figs, prunes, plums, nectarines, peaches, cherries, grapes, melons, nuts, soups, eggs, cheeses, and more . . . But there are certain foods you must never touch again, if you wish a permanent cure, he says.

Complete daily menus for breakfast, lunch and supper are given for the first 7 days, with 50 more mouth watering gourmet recipes!

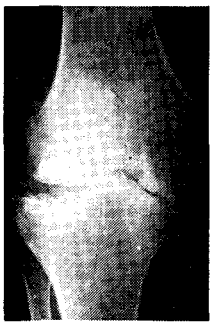
Is That All There Is To It?

Just about. As for steps 2 and 3 — you may not need them. But if you do, they are simply aids to elimination (for purification and internal cleansing), and a very few other simple steps.

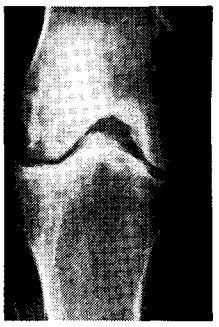
No gadgets or hocus pocus, no bigger and better pills, no expensive diathermy, whirlpool, or harsh exercises of any kind.

See For Yourself . . . At Our Risk

See for yourself. You can enjoy absolutely pain-free living, and an arthritis-free tomorrow, says Dr. Campbell. Now, for the first time, you can be free of heat, pain, swelling and deformity — no matter what your age, he says, because arthritis CAN and IS being CURED. **"There is no need for anyone," he says, "to ever get an arthritis attack again."**



Lack of joint space around knee. Bones rub. Normal motion impossible.



Greater joint space provides pain-free motion, normal walking.

X-RAYS SHOW POSITIVE PROOF!

. . . says Dr. Campbell: Look at the before-and-after X-rays shown above, and know that now, for the first time perhaps, you can enjoy an absolutely pain-free, arthritis-free tomorrow.

- **"Expect a 'miracle'," says Dr. Campbell.**
- **"Expect your pain to start diminishing from the start."**
- **"Expect no need for aspirin or other pain relievers in a week to ten days."**
- **"Expect a continuing improvement in your joint mobility . . . X-rays will reveal progress in the restoration of damaged bone structure in three to six months."**
- **"Expect a normal life without arthritic pain . . ."**

MEET DR. CAMPBELL

Dr. Giraud W. Campbell is a graduate of the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, Class of 1931. Since then he has practiced for over 40 years in New York State. After World War II, Dr. Campbell commenced his nutritional and laboratory research in arthritis. "For the past 15 years," he says, "I have been curing arthritis. Those that are bedridden . . . in the acute inflammatory state . . . show the most dramatic response. In from 3 to 10 days their pains cease, and repair sets in. I have over 1,000 successfully treated cases in my files." He was one of the founders of the Long Island Osteopathic Society and is a member of several leading professional groups.

ASTOUNDING LETTERS FROM EX-ARTHRITIS VICTIMS RAISES ARMS IN PRAISE!

I had been in an auto accident which affected my spine and caused chronic arthritis. I couldn't raise my arms without severe pain; combing my hair was almost impossible. Doctors gave me up to 24 aspirins per day, traction, hydrotherapy, sonic ray therapy and physiotherapy. It was at this time that I began treatment with Dr. Campbell . . . After treatment started, I felt a tremendous improvement in seven days. Within two weeks the brace was off and I felt better in gradual movement constantly upward. It was like a miracle.—H.G.

SPINE HEALED!

I was discharged from the Army in 1945. Snortly thereafter, I began to experience pains in my lower back and the disease became steadily worse. I became more crippled. My spine, at this time, had practically fused solid. Pain . . . by now . . . was continuous, day and night, with no relief. At this point I heard of Dr. Giraud Campbell. To my amazement within two weeks, the pain decreased at least 50%. I was able to walk better. I only wish I had come under Dr. Campbell's care . . . when the disease first started.

Yours truly, F.S., Roslyn, New York

Dark portions or spots of this X-ray show softening of shinbone, which actually bends —in an advanced case of Paget's disease, deemed incurable.

Six months later—with Dr. Campbell's method —X-ray shows thickening of bone (white area). Bone is now stronger and no longer bends.

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of life. Every writer must have some complicity in the schemes and the delusions of his characters: he cannot be so high-minded as literary critics. . . . Perhaps Fitzgerald had a greater complicity in the foolishness of his moment than most other writers have, but the pathos of his life and the greatness of his work derive from the extent to which he could both do emotional justice to this foolishness and mature beyond it. Had Fitzgerald been immune to the yearnings of American life, he would have been a wiser man than he was, but certainly not a better novelist. As he worshiped wealth, youth, and glamour, they were surely false; as he later turned against them, his turning was true; but even in his turning, he kept some essential part of his earlier worship, and—one is inclined to say—he was right to do so.

Glamour is the crucial word here. Fitzgerald and Hemingway, as late romantics, wanted visible signs of grace: no small demand to make upon America. Hemingway gave up and looked abroad, as if grace had gone into exile. Fitzgerald wanted to find grace in the very materiality of the meretricious, perhaps in that aura of stylized excitement we call glamour. On Sundays and at other pious moments we know this to be a delusion, but in our actuality it is a delusion we cannot bear to shake off. Glamour, one learns from the dictionary, carries with it "a magical aura," some transfiguring dimension endowing this world with the ineffable traits that classical religion had proposed for the other world. A heresy, of course. But surely the central American heresy, and in trying to make the quest for glamour into a discovery of value, Fitzgerald summoned the American experience as no one else has in the twentieth century.

But he went still further. Rereading *The Great Gatsby* some weeks ago, I was overcome with admiration for its perfect articulation, as one is overcome in reading Benjamin Constant's *Adolphe* or Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*. But it was not an especially moving experience, perhaps because Fitzgerald's book

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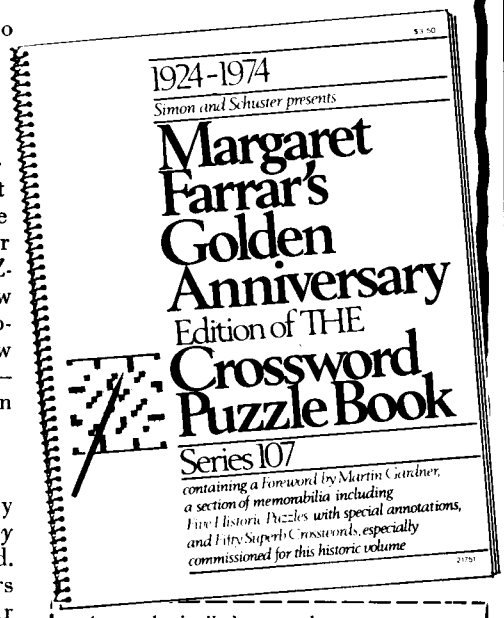
It's been 50 years ago this month that the first issue of *The Saturday Review of Literature* appeared on the newsstands. In its pages was a provocative advertisement for the first collection of "one of America's most popular cerebral pastimes," the crossword puzzle. Volume number one of THE CROSSWORD PUZZLE BOOK had been, just a few months before, the very first publishing venture of the brand new house of Simon and Schuster — and was currently *the* non-fiction bestseller of the time.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Edited by Arthur Swan

The object of the game is to complete the poem by thinking of one word whose letters, when rearranged, will yield the appropriate word for each series of blanks. Each dash within a blank corresponds to a letter of the word. Answers on page 48.

When Spring's first __ __ __ __ __
had pierced the crusted snow,
As green as __ __ __ __ __, it
heartened with its show
A million verdant __ __ __ __ __,
that in turn
Inspired the __ __ __ __ __ to
blossom by the burn.
And now the bee __ __ __ __ __
pollen and perfume;
The butterfly __ __ __ __ __ nectar from the bloom;
The beetle does not __ __ __ __ __
the spreading weeds,
But __ __ __ __ __ from them the
sustenance it needs.
The season's ceaseless canon does
not thin
Since, like a __ __ __ __ __,
Spring cues voices in;
But none can __ __ __ __ __ the
phrases that they sing
Or for an __ __ __ __ __ buy one
song of Spring! A. S.

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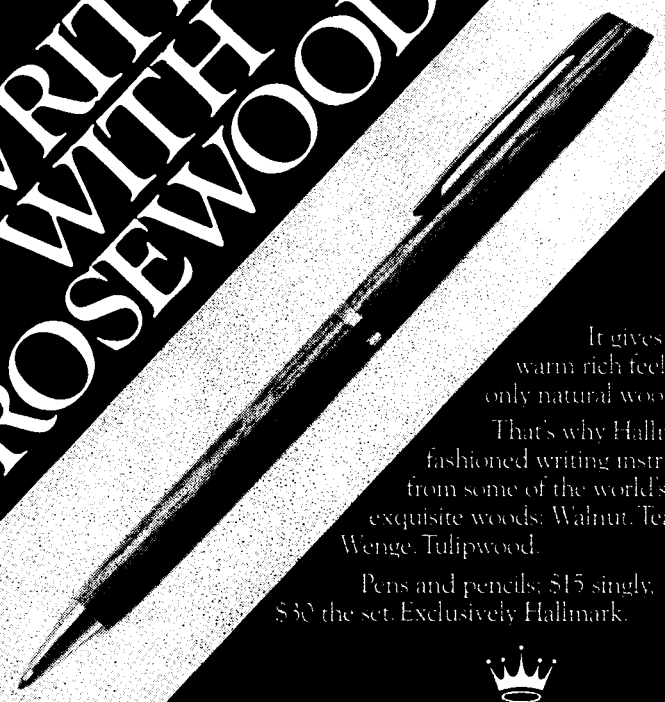

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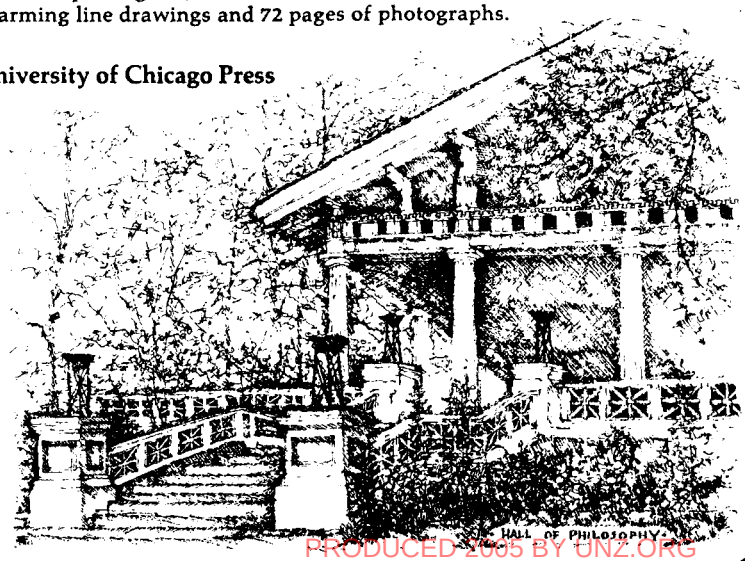

has become congealed for us as a classic, perhaps because its self-sufficiency leaves it without those reverberations we expect from the greatest literature. But rereading Fitzgerald's next novel, *Tender Is the Night*, I became convinced that—together with Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*, Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, and Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*—this is the novel which marks the entrance of American culture into tragedy. Here American fiction moves beyond the idyll, the epic, and the myth—all of which dominate our writing in the nineteenth century—and comes to the torn substances of life, such as we encounter in the greatest European novels.

Tender Is the Night is a badly flawed book but nevertheless wonderfully sustained by the decorum of considerateness which Fitzgerald brought to even the least worthy of his characters. Figures like Dick Diver, Nicole Warren, and Rosemary Hoyt are, of course, distinctively American, but we are not tempted to think of them merely as Americans or as "representing" American experience in some high, mythic way. They are all delicately life-sized, neither overblown for purposes of epic nor shrunken for purposes of comic assault; they are worthy of comparison with Anna Karenina and Tess of the D'Urbervilles and Isabel Archer; they share in our common fate of disintegration. Here Fitzgerald writes with the supreme vulnerability that William Troy once called "the authority of failure," and through it he reaches, if not the great classic pattern of tragedy, then as much of the texture of the tragic as modern life allows. The American with the sensibility of a romantic brought up in the Twenties has matured into a man to whom suffering is as familiar as water, and there are passages of chaste eloquence that can move one more than whole books:

> One writes of scars healed, a loose parallel to the pathology of the skin, but there is no such thing in the life of the individual. There are open wounds, shrunk sometimes to the size of a pinprick, but wounds still. The marks of suffering are more comparable to the loss of a finger, or of the sight of an eye. We may not miss them, either, for one minute in a year, but if we should there is nothing to be done about it.

BUT THERE IS ANOTHER major American voice that first made itself heard in the Twenties, less immediately moving than that of Fitzgerald but serving beautifully

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to link the two great periods of American literature. Wallace Stevens, drawn to glitter in his earliest poems as Fitzgerald was to glamour, is a many-sided poet, rich and complicated. One side of him has recently been evoked by Harold Bloom, who sees Stevens as descended from "the inescapable father of the American Sublime," Ralph Waldo Emerson.

But there is another Stevens (there always is), a poet so aware of the sentiments shared by the writers of the Twenties that he quickly absorbs them and moves beyond. As I read Stevens, the idea of what I have called moral style, though not of course the term itself, seems to be employed with some deliberateness, in part as a counter to that side of himself which yields to "the American Sublime," the Emersonian expansiveness. At the base of Stevens's work, as a force barely acknowledged yet always felt, lies a pressing awareness of human disorder. Rarely does it emerge as a dramatized instance; a trained connoisseur in chaos, he sees no need to linger before the evidence; other writers have fulfilled that task. The disorder that occupies the foreground of so much modern literature is calmly accepted by Stevens, just as the phases of American consciousness represented by Emerson and Fitzgerald are absorbed. In Stevens's poetry a secular imagination measures with notable composure the losses it has suffered from the exhaustion of religious and native myths and then hopes that emotional equivalents or surrogates can be found in "One's self and the mountains of one's land"—which is not, I think, so very far from what Hemingway and, less directly, Fitzgerald were hoping for.

If Stevens summons the romantic Emersonian voice acknowledging "something illogically received," he also speaks for a sensibility beyond Fitzgerald's pain:

> The earth for us is flat and bare.
> There are no shadows. Poetry
>
> Exceeding music must take the place
> Of empty heaven and its hymns,
>
> Ourselves in poetry must take their place . . .

Calmly, in the ruminative comedy of a mind accepting the deflations of modern history, Stevens writes his poems to rediscover the human gift for self-acceptance, poems that may enlarge a little our margins of autonomy and pleasure. Seeking a way to wrest convictions of selfhood out of a shameful era, Stevens turns us back to American nineteenth-century innerness but without pretending to reach American nineteenth-century transcendence. He tells us that, in times after crisis, there is always the possibility of attending our own consciousness, not fretfully, but just to listen to the hum of life. And even to the motions of decay and dying:

> Our bloom is gone. We are the fruits thereof.
> Two golden gourds distended on our vines . . .
> Distorted by hale fatness, turned grotesque.
> We hang like warty squashes, streaked and rayed,
> The laughing sky will see the two of us
> Washed into rinds by rotting winter rains.

One likes to indulge the fantasy, admittedly farfetched, that Dick Diver might speak such words to Nicole at the end of *Tender Is the Night*, but of course he cannot. The two of them remain too painfully locked into their agitation.

The search for moral style, that remnant which may save us after the collapse of our myths, places a tremendous burden upon literature, almost demanding that it provide us with norms of value we cannot find in experience. Yet precisely this aspect of the work of writers like Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Stevens—utterly different in their personal sensibility but linked by a common situation—makes them seem close to us, sharing our needs and desires. □

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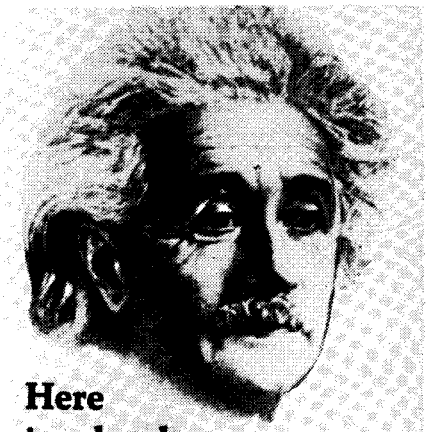

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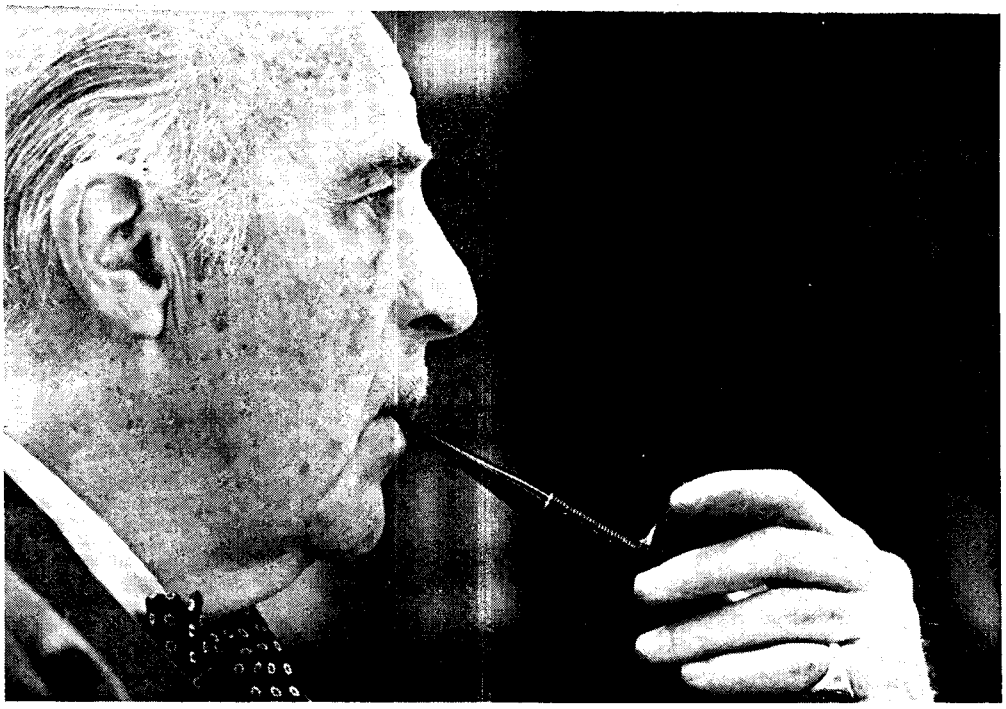

Allen Green: Visual Departures

Cass Canfield—"To be a good manager—or if you like, president—of a publishing house is rather like trying to run the Metropolitan Opera."

A Canfield-Knopf Dialogue

Two leaders of U. S. book publishing reflect on the past 50 years.

The deans of American book publishing today are Cass Canfield and Alfred A. Knopf. Both have helped to set high standards in the world of books during the half-century covered in this anniversary issue. Cass Canfield, former president of Harper & Brothers and presently senior editor of Harper & Row, has published, among others, John Gunther, Thornton Wilder, and J. B. Priestley. Alfred A. Knopf, chairman emeritus and founder of the publishing house that bears his name, has encouraged such writers as Willa Cather, H. L. Mencken, and Thomas Mann. The two doyens of book publishing recently met in the offices of Saturday Review/World *with John K. Hutchens, former editor of* The New York Times Book Review *and now a member of the editorial board of the Book-of-the-Month Club, to talk about their lifetimes of literary pursuit.*

Hutchens: *Let's start with today's fiction and poetry writers and talk about how they compare with the writers of half a century ago—especially of the mid-Twenties.*

Canfield: The Twenties was the period of Dreiser, Cather, Fitzgerald, Edna Millay, Aldous Huxley, Dos Passos, Carl Van Vechten, Hemingway, Thornton Wilder, Archibald MacLeish, Sinclair Lewis, and E. E. Cummings, among others. Quite a gallery! It's difficult, however, to compare novelists and poets of then and now because the times and the moods of the writers differ so greatly. Even so, I doubt that today's authors as a group have the status or luster of the ones I named.

Knopf: I agree: things were much livelier in those days. When a new book by H. G. Wells came out, large numbers of young people read it. They didn't wait to see what Sunday's *New York Times Book Review*, or any other reviews, said about it. But how many of those writers are still read today? Even the best of them, like Conrad, after riding the crest of the wave may find themselves in the trough. Those who are really good are eventually rediscovered.

Canfield: The Twenties was also a lively time for publishing companies. Many new houses were flourishing. Alfred A. Knopf was relatively new then. So were Harcourt Brace, Random House, Simon and Schuster, and Viking Press.

H: *Mr. Knopf, in a recent interview you said there are very few writers today who can write a simple declarative sentence. Were writers then as dependent upon editors as they seem to be today?*

Knopf: Well, in the early days, things were quite simple. The books came in; we published them as written. I would never have dreamed of suggesting, say, to Willa Cather or Carl Van Vechten or even Joseph Hergesheimer, with whom I was closest, what they should do. The idea of a writer's coming to a publisher—editors were not so common in those days—and saying, "Do you think I ought to write this, or do you think I ought to write that?" was completely unheard of. A publisher was regarded—and so, in turn, was the writer—as a pro. A writer's job was to write a book and give it to you. There were brilliant editors, but the impression I get looking back is that their function was largely social—having dinner and spending an evening with an author, talking over what he had done. Edward Garnett in London must have encouraged a great many people like Galsworthy and Conrad. But it's hard for me to believe that Garnett and his generation acted in any sense as most publishers and editors act these days.

H: *However, one automatically thinks of Maxwell Perkins of Scribner's, who did so much for various writers, notably Thomas Wolfe.*

Canfield: Obviously, he did a great deal for Wolfe—in fact, he edited himself right out of the job of publishing Wolfe. It seemed incredible to me, when I heard it, that Wolfe was leaving Scribner's. But it turned out to be true, and the reason, I think, was that Wolfe felt that the books were not his novels anymore. I think Wolfe was wrong about that. I'm sure that Perkins didn't tamper with his prose; he just cut and cut and cut—which was quite necessary. He also made suggestions. But Wolfe wanted to be his own master.

H: *You both must have had special favorites through the years—both as persons and as artists.*

Canfield: Offhand, one of my favorites is *Reveille in Washington* by Margaret Leech—a very fine book about the city

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of Washington during the Civil War. Then there are the early J. B. Priestley novels like *The Good Companions*—very readable—E. B. White, and, of course, the Huxleys, Aldous and Julian. And John Gunther's series.

H: *Where did you run across Gunther?*

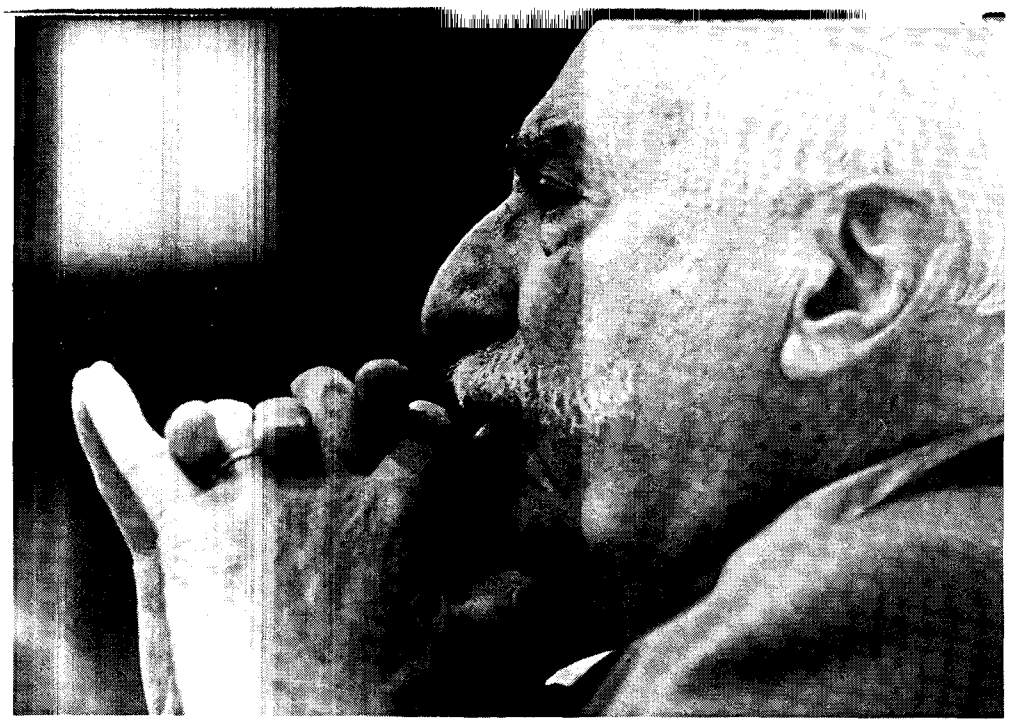
Canfield: Gunther had published a very early, quite good novel, but it didn't sell. Then he wrote a marvelous piece for *Harper's* magazine called "The Reichstag Fire." At that time, I had a vague idea that if one could find an adventurous and competent journalist to write a book about the whole of Europe—not just one country—it would be interesting and probably sell well. I approached Gunther, then a foreign correspondent for the *Chicago Daily News*. He couldn't do it, though he was rather interested, because in order to write the book he'd have to give up his job, and he couldn't afford to take the chance. A couple of years passed, and then an agent and friend, Bernice Baumgarten, came into the picture. Through her he demanded an advance that seemed enormous at the time—$5,000. I ran around to the office of *Harper's* magazine, and they said, "Well, we'll put up $1,000 of it." So then, with a gulp, I agreed to $5,000. Still, John didn't feel he could take the risk. Finally, I approached him early one morning, just as he was sailing for Europe. He had had a big night and now had a classic hangover, with his head bent over and a wet towel around it. He said slowly, "I have to pack my bags and get on a boat within an hour and a half, and if you'll just get out of this room, I'll do anything you ask." I said, "Fine, John. Sign this contract." He did, and then immediately said, "It doesn't mean anything." But it *did*. It had a psychological effect; and he started writing *Inside Europe* very soon.

H: *And with that, a new school of reporting began.*

Canfield: It did, and it launched an "Inside" series that covered every continent of the world.

H: *Mr. Knopf, I think I know who your favorite author was: Willa Cather. How did you find her?*

Knopf: Believe it or not, Cather came in "over the transom." She called up my wife, Blanche, and made an appointment to see me. She said that she had been impressed by what we were publishing, and she gave me a book of short stories



Alfred A. Knopf—"I've lived through a lot of bouts with censorship . . . and I always come out the same way: who is fit to be the censor?"

—*Youth and the Bright Medusa*—which I was naturally very proud to have. Later, we were having tea at the old Claridge Hotel on Broadway, and I said to her, "You know, I did an unusual thing. I agreed to publish a book of short stories for you with no commitment on your part whatever as to the future." She said, "Oh, I have to give Houghton Mifflin my next novel, but after that I'm coming to you." Cather was a very remarkable woman.

H: *By and large, how easy or difficult were your authors to get along with?*

Canfield: Well, I *thought* you would ask me about the management side of publishing. To be a good manager—or if you like, president—of a publishing house is rather like trying to run the Metropolitan Opera. Still, if authors weren't temperamental, they probably wouldn't be very good authors.

Knopf: We had a lot of gall in those days, and we wrote and spoke with a frankness we'd hesitate to use today. The most disagreeable author I ever had to deal with was B. H. Haggin, the music critic. We remained good friends for a while. But then I had a postcard from him, just a postcard, saying that from now on "I will do without your angry rages, and you will do without my books."

H: *I think the record shows, however, that you and Cass Canfield have commanded the loyalty of your authors. They have stayed with you year in and year out.*

Knopf: Yes, to a most astonishing degree. Take Alistair Cooke and this huge, terrific, and profitable book of his—*Alistair Cooke's America*. Now, Time-Life, Inc., had something to do with the financing of that television series. It would have been easy for Alistair to simply say, "You know, I'd do anything in the world for you, Alfred, but I can't do anything in this situation. Little, Brown, a property of Time-Life, Inc., must have this book." But Alistair fought like a tiger to keep that book for us.

H: *What book is each of you proudest and happiest to have published?*

Canfield: Well, I would think Thornton Wilder's *The Ides of March* was my favorite.

Knopf: It's awfully hard to say. Among novels, I'd say Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop* or Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*. In non-fiction, I suppose Mencken's *The American Language*.

H: *We were speaking of the creative writer's temperament a moment ago. What about his conceit?*

Knopf: I don't mind conceit in a man who merits it, so to speak. I didn't object in the least, say, to Conrad's and Mann's good opinions of themselves.

H: *Mr. Canfield, didn't you once say that Zane Grey seriously considered himself*

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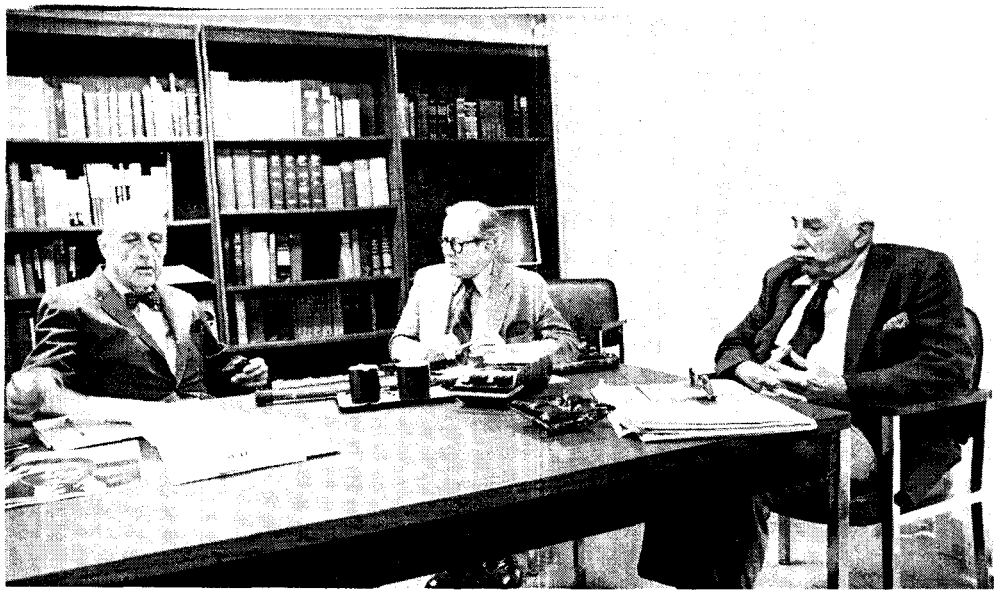

Cass Canfield, John K. Hutchens, and Alfred A. Knopf—"literary pursuit."

one of the two finest novelists in the United States?

Canfield: Yes, he bracketed himself with Mark Twain! After Grey died, I visited his widow in Pasadena. There was a hushed atmosphere. She took me up to his study, where everything had been left exactly as it was, with the pens lying on the table, as with the Czar of Russia after he was assassinated.

H: *Have any books gotten away from you that you've regretted?*

Canfield: Glad you asked that.

Knopf: Any book that he wanted but didn't get, got away from him.

Canfield: George Orwell's *1984* got away —we turned it down after publishing his perfectly delightful *Down and Out in Paris and London*, which I accepted when I was working for Harper's in London a long time ago. When *1984* came in, I sent it to a reader for a quick reading. Her report wasn't good—something about the book's falling between two stools. I was in a hurry to sail for Europe, so I went along with her opinion. There's an example of paying too much attention to the report of the reader.

H: *How would you characterize F. N. Doubleday, Alfred McIntyre, and other great publishing figures of 50 years ago?*

Canfield: Above all, each was a good manager, businessman, and editor—a very difficult combination to achieve. Usually a man is one or the other. But a real publisher has got to be all three.

H: *Mr. Canfield, in your volume of memoirs,* Up and Down and Around, *you said a good publisher should have "a kind of animal instinct for spotting the prey, the writer, before he has displayed his full talents." Could you go on from there?*

Canfield: Yes. A publisher who is outstanding in that respect is my friend Hamish Hamilton of London. He has the gift of talking to a young author for the first time, without having read a word of what he has written, and deciding this is somebody I want to publish or somebody I'm not anxious to publish. He is not invariably right, but he almost always has been. That is the kind of animal instinct I meant.

H: *Mr. Knopf, F. N. Doubleday was your first boss. What did you learn from him?*

Knopf: I can't say I learned anything much from FND, because I had so little contact with him. Remember, I was hired there at eight dollars a week to work an adding machine in the accounting department. That was a long way from publishing.

Canfield: Alfred, I've heard that when you worked for Doubleday as a younger man, you would buttonhole people and say, "There's one author on our list we must hang on to. He doesn't sell now, but he will." Wasn't Conrad one of those?

Knopf: Well, that's an exaggeration.

H: *Conrad never sold well here?*

Knopf: Oh, no. Not then, at any rate. Most publishers knew that Conrad just lived on advance after advance. When one got tired of paying him unearned advances, he moved on to someone else. F. N. Doubleday himself came back from one of his European trips with an arrangement to publish Conrad in the future. By that time, I was allowed to sit in, as a listener mainly, at the weekly editorial meetings held in the firm's dining room. When his next manuscript, *Chance,* came in, they gave it to me to read first. I wrote Conrad an admiring letter about it, and he wrote back an astonishing reply, something to the effect that it was interesting to be discovered by one's publisher after all these years. Only a fresh kid would have thought of it, but I cooked up a promotional scheme —testimonials, a special booklet—and eventually *Chance* sold 50,000 copies.

H: *Wasn't it you, Mr. Knopf, who said that lately editors have taken over to an alarming degree, to the point where quite frequently they are the authors of books? Could both of you touch on that?*

Canfield: Yes, as Alfred has said, there is much more editing—in the sense of rewriting—than there used to be. My own view is that if a manuscript needs revision and change, the good and wise editor should ask the author to come in. He should then be prepared to tell him, in as much detail as necessary, what he thinks is wrong with the manuscript, and then leave it to the author to revise. If the author isn't capable of revising his own work, the chances are that it isn't worth publishing. If he is capable, he'll do it a good deal better than any editor can.

I'd say one cause for the falling off in personal relations between editors and authors is the agents. I don't mean to call them villains; they see their job as doing the best they can for the author financially, but sometimes they carry that pretty far. When you have published an author successfully, pleasantly, for a number of years, and the agent suddenly says he wants a six-figure advance . . . Well, that ends that.

Knopf: Agents today are getting just as picky and choosy as the publishers are. They don't want to put in the work on clients—I'm speaking not out of first-hand knowledge and not with authority, but I'm pretty sure I'm right. They simply aren't interested anymore in the client who needs a lot of advice.

H: *How much has television affected the buying and reading of books?*

Knopf: I don't think television has had any deleterious effect on reading. Of course, the minute I talk to anybody about the fantastic success of *Alistair Cooke's America,* they explain it as the result of television.

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Canfield: Curious thing. You have all seen children glued to the television set for hours and hours on end, every day. But since the coming of television, sales of children's books have gone up enormously. That's very largely a library sale, but the libraries wouldn't buy the books if the kids weren't reading them.

H: *Mr. Knopf, in a recent interview you spoke of the decline in taste, quality, and principles and said "We live in the age of the slob."*

Knopf: That provoked two responses that I remember. One from Arthur Schlesinger, who said he did not like to be called a "slob," and one from John Hersey, which ended, "your affectionate slob."

H: *Was it chiefly fiction that you had in mind?*

Knopf: Oh, I had in mind everything. People *are* slobs—in the sense of a decline of manners. When you see somebody with, relatively speaking, old-fashioned manners, somebody who writes a bread-and-butter letter when he's had a meal—that's exceptional.

H: *Is that "slobdom" reflected today in fiction by writers of skill and quality?*

Canfield: Well, writers often are writing about slobs, really, and sometimes it makes for good fiction.

H: *Does the "age of the slob" relate to the acceptance—critically and artistically—of pornography, or what was once considered pornography?*

Knopf: You can't talk about pornography, it seems to me, without talking about censorship. I've lived through a lot of bouts with censorship. I've wrestled a lot with this problem, and I always come out the same way: who is fit to be the censor?

H: *In that respect, where does the most recent Supreme Court censorship decision leave us?*

Knopf: Crazy.

H: *It leaves us with local censorship, doesn't it?*

Canfield: That's right. The Publishers Association is, I believe, working to make it at least statewide.

Knopf: Well, I think Chief Justice Burger was foolish to have been party to such a decision.

H: *Of what importance are critics to a writer? Does a writer learn anything from his critics?*

Knopf: I don't know that we have any critics. Reviewers, yes.

H: *Certainly there have been newspaper reviewers who have affected the sale of a book?*

Knopf: There's no one quite like William Lyon Phelps in his day at Yale.

H: *You mean when he was lecturing publicly?*

Knopf: Yes, when he lectured around at the schools and was catching the young as undergraduates. Nor is there anyone today like Mencken or Heywood Broun. I mean there's nobody who can attract almost immediate attention to a book. Nowadays, the front page of *The New York Times Book Review* is both the envy and the curse of the publisher and the author. I used to say that if you could get the cover of *Time*, the cover of the *Saturday Review*, and the front page of *The New York Times Book Review* all favorable and all appearing within not over two months but, say, in a matter of two or three weeks, then you could measure their influence. But if the reviews were spread over a long period, you couldn't. The *Times* remains the most powerful medium today.

Canfield: Occasionally, a non-critic commenting on a book can have an enormous influence. The case, for instance, of Mary Webb's *Precious Bane*, quite unknown in 1926 and not too well known in this country now. Prime Minister [Stanley] Baldwin read the book—he had very good taste—and said, "This is a remarkable novel." Immediately it sold and went on to become a best-seller.

H: *In just 15 years the number of book titles in the United States has increased from about 11,000 a year to about 35,000. Why this explosion at a time when the public—if we can believe Professor McLuhan—is deserting the printed word?*

Canfield: I don't think they are.

Knopf: I think it's a tribute, basically, to the collective idiocy of publishers. In a long life, the only thing I've found all publishers in agreement about always, whenever the question is raised, is that too many books are published.

H: *I've heard it said that the staffs of certain big publishers have become so large that these houses overproduce books just to keep employees busy.*

Knopf: Well, that's true. An editor is regarded, really, as a procurer. When the boss says, "What the hell, you didn't get anything this year," no editor replies, "But, my dear man, think of what I've *saved* you from publishing." That's never pointed out, just as no publisher who goes to Europe comes back saying, "I had a wonderful trip; I didn't buy a single book." He buys books over there that he would turn down in New York.

H: *I suppose it's simple realism that inferior but profitable books have to be published to pay for superior but probably less profitable books.*

Canfield: But it's also true that it's much more difficult for an editor to pick out the potentially popular book than it is for an editor to pick out the book of quality.

Knopf: He doesn't really pick it out. He picks an author on somebody else's list and buys him.

H: *Are you suggesting that there is a fine art of author stealing?*

Knopf: Oh my God, no!

H: *A final question: What about the young man or woman just out of college who wants to go into publishing? What are the incentives? What are the rewards?*

Knopf: Well, in today's market they get damn good salaries. We aren't getting kids for $15 a week to work in the accounting department. And editors get . . . very frankly, I don't dare ask in our place what editors are being paid today.

H: *Going into publishing on one's own is something else again. What was your capital when you began, Mr. Canfield?*

Canfield: Nominal.

H: *Mr. Knopf, what sum did you start with?*

Knopf: Five thousand. But it was a different world.

Canfield: Yes, it was. □

"If authors weren't temperamental, they probably wouldn't be very good authors"—Cass Canfield.

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Top of My Head

by Goodman Ace

The Semi-Centennial Report

Fifty years ago today I was younger. But not all that much.

When the editor of this magazine tells this contributor to come up with a column recalling the "volatile changes" of the past 50 years, he is barking up the wrong typewriter.

At the moment I am experiencing great difficulty in remembering what I had for breakfast this morning.

However, never having been one to shirk a writing chore, I get into my Hupmobile to make the trip back to 1924, driving along the toll booth–laden Freeways to Yesteryears, hoping to spot a clue on the landscape that will jolt my memory.

The first clue, and I suppose the most popular choice for the most historic event of the past 50 years, is the landing of man on the moon.

Apollo 11 did it on July 20, 1969, at 4:17:40 P.M. Eastern Standard Time (end of homework).

Captain Neil Armstrong had no trouble in finding a parking space for his vehicle, and he spoke quietly into the intercom. "Houston," he said. "Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed." As if his subway train had arrived at Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn.

Six and a half hours later he climbed down his ladder and stepped gingerly on the powdered surface, saying, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Hundreds of millions of earthbounds, who had breathlessly been watching TV to see that precious moment in time, arose, took one giant leap to the refrigerator for a can of beer, and jubilantly hoisted a toast to those young men in their flying machine because they had made the unthinkable thinkable.

That's the way it was down here on earth. However, it was a different story up there. History has not recorded it, but this being a special fiftieth-anniversary issue of *SR/W*, I imagine they want me to go into the event in some depth.

So I can now divulge that when Apollo 11 came down and men walked on the moon, God sighed and said: "Well, there goes the neighborhood."

And after other spaceships had followed, He saw in some dismay the littered disarray on His planet that rhymed with June, and He quoted President Nixon: "Americans are like children." Adding, "They like to dig in the sand."

But man continues to dream the impossible. Man's never-ending quest for knowledge of the secrets that lie in the heavens is not to be denied. So, in the few years that followed the first invasion of another planet, our scientists have garnered a storehouse of invaluable data from following Apollos.

For one thing, we now definitely know that Tang is good for you.

For another, if you've been paying close attention, scientists in high glee announced that one rock brought back by Apollo 17 was 4.6 billion years old, an age that coincides with the figure scientists have been saying all along is the origin of the solar system.

Compare this rock of ages with the rock brought back by an earlier Apollo, a rock scientists had calibrated at a measly 4.5 billion years, and you can understand their pleasure. Because that 4.5 billion figure does *not* coincide with their figure of the origin of the solar system.

However, it *does* coincide with the origin of the "I Love Lucy" reruns on TV.

MOVING BACKWARD RIGHT ALONG, we come next to The Big Scandal. A political abomination that shook, as they say, the very foundation of a nation, erased the credibility of a man in high office, and denigrated the dignity of the high office he held.

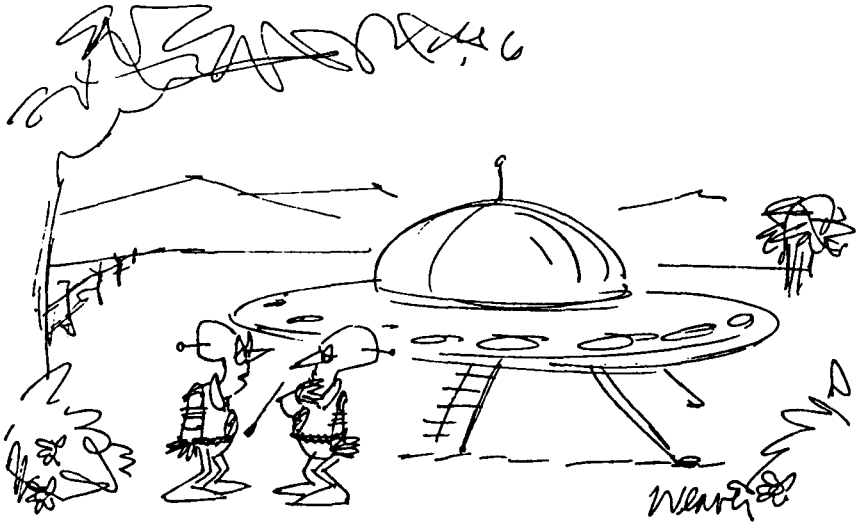
I refer, of course, to John Profumo, former member of England's Cabinet. To be exact, the Right Honorable John Profumo, secretary of state for war until June of 1963, when it was discovered he had a lady friend.

She was not one of the Queen's ladies-in-waiting. To be more exact, Miss Christine Keeler was a lady-on-call, with whom the Right Honorable Secretary of State for War found himself in a battle of the sexes and was forced to surrender his post. *Hors de combat.* To be most exact.

LET ME SEE. There was one other volatile event during this "point in time," but it all happened in the last four or five years, and I'm sitting so close that the perspective is diffused. Just as I can't recall what I had for breakfast this morning.

However, in a future issue I will be here, looking 50 years ahead to 2024. From that distance, I will be more capable of recording this event in its pristine historic configuration, after the pollution of innuendos and suspicions will have been washed away by a half-century of water that has flowed under the gate. □

Answer to *Wit Twister* (see page 40): spear, prase, apers, pears, rapes, reaps, spare, pares, presa, parse.



March 9, 1968
James Weaver

"Look, we've come all this far. I don't think we should leave without at least saying 'Hello' to Ray Bradbury."

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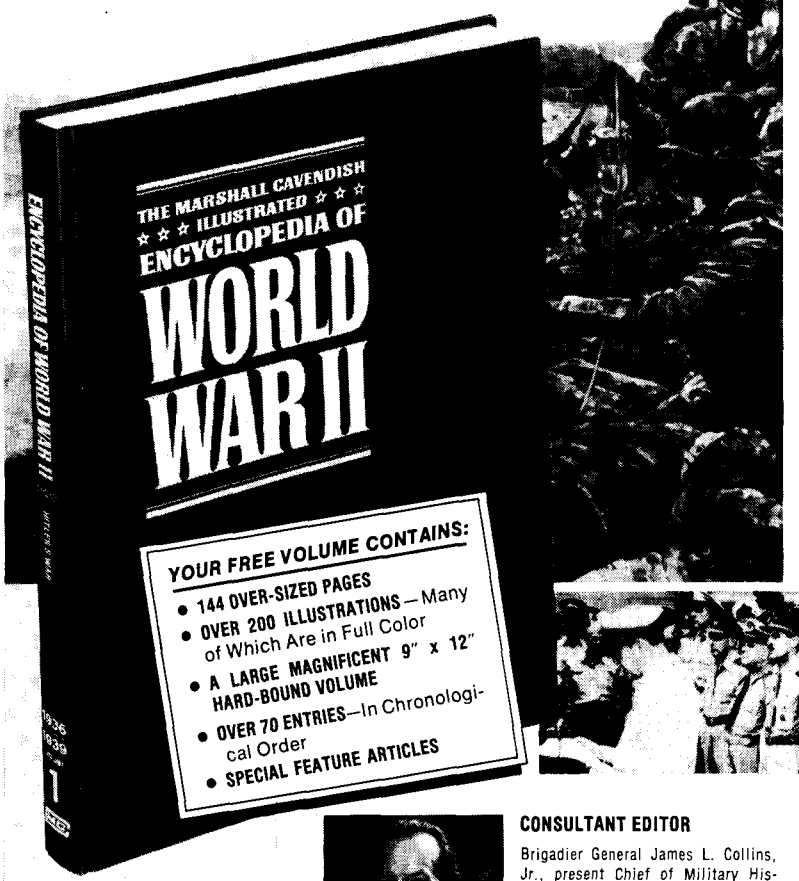

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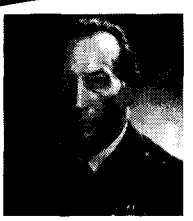

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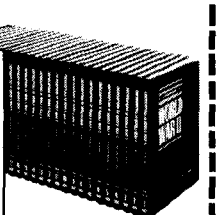

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1935

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"DRINKING AND DRIVING DO NOT MIX"

LIQUOR has no place in the front seat of an automobile . . . alcohol and gasoline do not mix.

These statements may seem to work directly against our self-interest.

But actually they do not.

It is very much to our self-interest to see that the privilege of drinking is not abused. It is to our interest to see that liquor is consumed as it should be consumed.

Even more important — as one of America's leading distillers we have a definite social responsibility. We must recognize and fulfil this responsibility in all its implications.

The true Place of Whiskey

Down through the ages, whiskey has played an honorable part in the scheme of gracious living. Fine whiskey (and only fine whiskey) can lend grace and friendliness to any occasion.

But — as we have said elsewhere — whiskey is a luxury and should be treated as such. It should be taken in moderation — and only in its proper place.

Neither whiskey nor any other alcoholic liquor has any place at the wheel of an automobile.

This conviction must be shared by everyone who reads the newspapers . . . by every thinking person who drives a car . . . by thoughtful people everywhere.

Therefore, we invite you to join us in the crusade for safer, saner driving. We invite you to cooperate with the police and highway departments of the nation.

We repeat — fine whiskey — when taken moderately . . . with a true appreciation of its taste, bouquet and character . . . brings a sense of friendliness and well-being to any social gathering.

But . . . and here we quote from a public statement made by Seagram's more than 6 months ago . . . "The pleasure which good whiskey offers is definitely a luxury . . . Treat whiskey as a luxury . . . The principle of moderation is not at variance with what common-sense suggests as the right course for us today . . . We feel sure that you will agree with us."

H. D. Pfeffer

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
JOSEPH E. SEAGRAM & SONS, INC.

FINE WHISKIES SINCE 1857

Seagram's

NOTE: Copies of this advertisement furnished on request to Highway Departments, Police Officials, Chambers of Commerce, Automobile Clubs, and any other interested civic groups or persons. Address: Seagram-Distillers Corp., Chrysler Bldg., N. Y.

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1974

The party begins.

I can drive when I drink.

2 drinks later.

I can drive when I drink.

After 4 drinks.

I can drive when I drink.

After 5 drinks.

I can drive when I drive.

7 drinks in all.

I can't even hold a pen.

The more you drink, the more coordination you lose. That's a fact, plain and simple.

Still, people drink too much and then go out and expect to handle a car.

When you drink too much you can't handle a car. You can't even handle a pen.

Seagram/distillers since 1857.

For enlarged reprints write Advertising Dept. F, Seagram Distillers Co., 375 Park Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10022.

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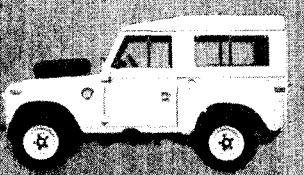
The Gas-Saving Marina. Just look at what went into it.

The Marina has a gas-saving, single carburetor version of our MGB engine, proven reliable in over 2 billion miles of driving. A great engine went in. And economy comes out—over 20 miles per gallon.

The Marina has positive rack and pinion steering like our Jaguar. When that goes in, responsive handling comes out.

The Marina has a rugged transmission and fade-resistant disc brakes like our Triumph. We put them in so driving satisfaction and confidence come out.



The Marina has a strong body shell whose torsional stiffness is greater than that of our rugged Land Rover. When strong construction goes in, durability comes out.

For the name of your nearest Austin Marina dealer, dial (800) 447-4700. In Illinois, (800) 322-4400. Toll free.

*Manufacturer's suggested retail price P.O.E. Does not include inland transportation, local taxes and preparation charges.

Austin Marina. $2,949*

The tough economy car from British Leyland.

BRITISH LEYLAND

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Manner of Speaking

by John Ciardi

What Makes the Difference?

It has become an academic formula to explain the change from one age of poetry to another as an interplay of the poetic and the anti-poetic. In time, runs the theory, the poetry of every age tends to become standardized and to pass from its formative masters to pallid imitators. Inevitably, then, new poets with new sensibilities begin to write in anti-poetic (anti-establishment) ways. So, to illustrate by massive oversimplification, the urbanity, learning, wit, formality, and meticulously polished discourse of an often satirical Alexander Pope was superseded by the deistically vague bucolics, the quasi-clerical high-mindedness, the flight from "society," and the sermonized discursiveness of William Wordsworth.

A column is not a history, and the columnist is forced to leap from peak to peak. In time Wordsworth's way of writing became a new poetic, and the new poetic began to seem banal and long-winded. Wit had not disappeared from England, but it made no appearances in this new poetry. Suppose, now, that a young poet, an admirer of Wordsworth's way, brought a nature poem to rest with the lines:

> So I believe, no doubt apart,
> In gracious nature's ample heart.
> Though man, destroyer of God's good,
> Black all with soot, stain all with blood.

And suppose now that an irreverent friend asked some hard questions of those lines. Can an intelligent man live beyond all doubt? Is nature gracious (say, during a hurricane)? Has it a heart? If man is a destroyer, is he not also our only maker? What is the young writer to do with these and many more possible questions?

If he is honest in his introspection, it may even occur to him that he has lied. That his admiration for the established poetic has led him to write what he does not really believe and does not really feel. Given that realization, either he must abandon writing in despair, or he must cast about for a new language, a new form, a nearer approach to his own sensibilities.

The radical poets do not turn from the past in hatred. William Carlos Williams's first little book consisted largely of Keatsian imitations, an apprenticeship in love, yet a lie about his own developing sensibilities. He had to put by that first love in the name of honesty. It was a sense of honesty that drove the poets who reshaped our poetry from about 1910 to 1930. They did not hate the old way. They found that within it they could not express the new ambivalences, dissonances, tempi, and psychomoral changes of their times. So Wilfred Owen went to war as if to High Church but was forced by the service there to write of the stink of hell.

The Victorian era and its aftermath almost made serenity seem possible. The caste system and England both seemed to be eternal. Trade was good. All was for the best in this best of worlds. And formality was not offended by high, if empty, rhetoric.

That seeming serenity trailed off into poetry that was either inconsequential or so darkly pessimistic that nothing, it seemed, could survive. Yet language survives, and poets survive to use it honestly. Good poetry is, above all, an act of emotional precision. That precision may be a matter of exact ambiguities. Eliot's "Prufrock" is an exact ambiguity. Prufrock has become too sterile to act out his natural impulses. Eliot does not sermonize him, nor does he pass judgment on him. He pities him, but he finds precise equivalents of his state of being.

"Prufrock" was first published in 1917, and by that time something like a revolution had happened in our poetry. Yet it is worth noting that the tone of "Prufrock" had already surfaced in some of Eliot's undergraduate poems, published years before in *The Harvard Advocate.*

TO ALLOW MYSELF another columnist's leap, the revolution of which "Prufrock" was a notable part was anti-rhetorical, unassertive, anti-homiletic. It contained within it the seeds of a future existentialism. It largely abandoned the overstatements of purple patches in favor of a reticent understatement. It preferred things to moralizations. Fantastic changes had taken place in man's way of life, and the new poetry had to respond to the dissonances and changed tempi of the new way.

And above all, it was exuberant. Language and forms were jumping through new hoops and being taught to land on perceptions and ways of perception previously unknown. For poetry is not defined by the sadness or the pessimism of its subject matter. Its excitement—always an act of joy—is in finding equivalents for what one feels. Even a true capture of one's feelings about suicide becomes an act of joy for the time of the writing, provided the capture is in fact true. Emily Dickinson had said it long before when she sent her poems to Higginson, asking, "Have I said it true?" It was that need to say it true that motivated the new poetry, which we may roughly date from about 1910. It is that same need that motivates all good poetry. □

Vahan Shirvanian
November 23, 1968

"Bruce, I've painted my body."

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by Leo Rosten

Marvels Overlooked

I shall tell you not of Einstein or penicillin, the miraculous laser or even the computers that out-magic Aladdin's lamp. I ask you merely to glance around the room you are in now, or stroll around your home, and note the marvels with which human ingenuity has, in half a century, enriched our lives.

I put it to you that neither the Pharaohs nor Montezuma, neither Croesus nor J. P. Morgan nor the mighty Manchus dreamed of such wonders as even the unrich among us take for granted.

Do you own a hi-fi? What shah or sultan of the past could hear what you hear? Pompey could not be enthralled by Mozart; Queen Victoria would have adored Richard Rodgers; and the profligate czars were bereft of Heifetz and Casals, *My Fair Lady* and *Guys and Dolls*.

Cameras. They preserve transient, treasured moments in a way no earlier generations thought possible. No people before us could see so full a record of themselves: at birth, on a first bike or dive, atop the Acropolis, before a Flatbush candy store. The girls we knew, the birthday cakes, the caps-and-gowns, our wedding rites and family reunions and excursions to Kankakee or Corsica—Newton would gasp over the immensities born of lens and film; and Edward Land would have been hailed a god in Nineveh or Peru with the sorcery of Polaroid.

Paperbacks? How many people, half a century ago, owned or read a classic? How unfortunate were those who lived before the dazzling words of Yeats and Frost and Malraux, Hemingway and O'Casey—and how many, many more?

Television? What words can one conjure to describe the sight of Neil Armstrong setting foot on the moon? The sight of Mars, the gauzy veils of Venus? Jacques Cousteau in the bowels of the sea? The tear-drenched days when John Kennedy lay in state, and when his coffin crept toward Arlington, and when his tiny son broke our hearts with that innocent salute?

The interview with Bertrand Russell or with Martin Luther King? The Watergate hearings, spinning such shockers as no writer of melodrama could possibly concoct? The dumbfounding desert dramas of the Yom Kippur war? The "Forsyte Saga"? Kenneth Clark's "Civilisation"? Movies like *Brief Encounter, The Heiress, High Noon?* "All in the Family," juggling hilarious insights such as 30 million viewers had never known?

Sports? I shudder at the prospect of sitting among howling poltroons on a freezing afternoon to savor the artistry of Joe Namath or O. J. Simpson; nor would I curse my way through traffic to see the New York Knicks take on Boston's Celtics. But in the blissful comfort of my easy chair—all these, without a jug of wine or thou, are paradise enow.

Food? Open your refrigerator. Freon gas and Clarence Birdseye offer both Harlem and Furnace Creek delicacies such as the larders of Henry VIII, Renaissance popes, and Diamond Jim Brady never boasted. Julia Child has trumped L'Escoffier, making gourmet cooks of housewives from Smackover (Ark.) to Sodom (N.Y.).

Sleep. According to a Moorish proverb, "Sleep makes every man a pasha." But how many pashas, wracked by insomnia, could compare their thousand nights with ours, blessed by capsules containing slumber?

Do you own a fountain pen? A ball point? A propelling pencil? Lord, the thousands of times I had to sharpen a lead or dip a nib into an inkwell and scratch out my words, blot and dip and splotch and then rewrite it all.

Do you hear a plane somewhere overhead? It took me five days and nights to ride a train from Los Angeles to New York, blackened by coal soot through the window, gasping for breath across the flaming Mojave, shivering as we crossed the Rockies, numbed by the interminable Great Plains. Now I make that trip in 315 flying minutes, listening to Berlioz or absorbed in a film. Marco Polo, were you but with us now.

The Louvre? The Alcazar? The Golden Horn? . . . I retched my way to Le Havre for six days across a vicious Atlantic; now the trip takes seven euphoric hours above the clouds. When I first went to Europe, no friend had ventured there. Today, I hardly meet a teenager who has not yawned in Waikiki or Wales, Bangkok or Berlin.

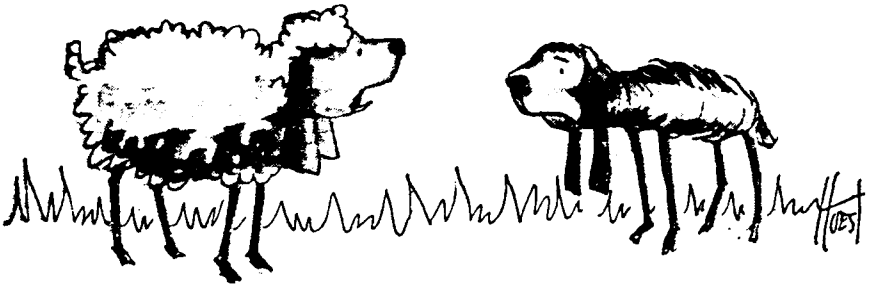
Laundry? How many shirts did I drag around the hemisphere to be sure I would daily find one clean? Oh, synthetic fibers! I can circle the globe with one valise. Magellan was not so fortunate.

Razors? Battery-driven, they have liberated me from the daily waste of time to which I was condemned by lather and blade. Now I shave, in whatever land I may be, whilst seated on the bathroom throne, reading the press or Thucydides, hearing the world's voices from a radio no larger than my palm. Could Louis XIV command such mirific barbering?

And when I browse in any bookstore and feast my eyes on Picasso or Klee, Angkor Wat or Fujiyama, Renoir or Modigliani or Wyeth, rare Walt Disney or great Matisse, I gaze upon wonders such as Cleopatra never saw. . . .

Zippers. My God, *zippers!* And aluminum foil. Dry cleaning. Kleenex. Spray paints. Staplers. Air conditioners—why, we have conquered hell itself.

YOU MAY SNIFF that all this is sheer surface, trivia ripped out of the fearful tragedies half a century has spawned. Sniff away. I am grateful to be alive now, heir to such splendors and comforts and miracles as the world of man could not offer men before. □



William P. Hoest
October 19, 1968

"I told you to wash only in lukewarm water."

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Curmudgeon-at-Large

by Cleveland Amory

Nostalgia, for a curmudgeon, is duck soup. Let us look for a moment at our mistakes—or, rather, other people's mistakes—over the past half-century. Tick them off: Women's suffrage. Child labor. Children. Labor. What's the use? It's a comedy of eras.

Is there anything that can be done about it? Don't even ask. Take women, for instance. Occasionally—let us be fair—here and there you will find an old-fashioned girl. But children—lots of luck. Lord Chesterfield said it best on November 6, 1747: "The young leading the young," he said, "is like the blind leading the blind; they will both fall into the ditch." And, in more modern times, on January 15, 1753, he continued, "Young men are apt to think themselves wise enough, as drunken men are apt to think themselves sober enough."

Of course, again here and there, you will find in the last 50 years an occasional bright spot. One of these occurred a few years ago in East Lansing, Mich. Out there Mr. and Mrs. Jules Williams may well have invented the idea of the century when they put a small advertisement in *Humanist Magazine*. It read:

> Have 14-year-old boy who wants to try different environment. Would like to trade for boy or girl for one year. References exchanged.

"We weren't trying," Mrs. Williams said, "to get rid of Brian. It was a sincere effort to give him a broader educational experience."

Sure it was, Mrs. Williams; sure it was. In any case, instead of getting one reply, or several or even a dozen, to their advertisement, the Williamses got hundreds. Everyone, it seemed, wanted a different child. And the idea of trading in your teenager on—you will pardon the expression—a new model spread like wildfire. Just imagine if someone had been able to offer an *old-fashioned* boy.

QUIZ QUESTION FOR NOSTALGIA BUFFS: who is Lolita Dolores Martinez Asunsolo Lopez Negrette? None other than the greatest beauty of the last 50 years. If you don't believe it, take a look at one of the summer choices of the Nostalgia Book Club. It's a stunning book called *Famous Faces*, by lawyer-photographer Arnold Weissberger, through the offices of that artful publisher, Harry Abrams. Of the more than 1,000 stage, screen, and television personalities pictured, there are no less than 24 shots of Miss Lolita Dolores, etc.—better known as Dolores Del Rio. No other person has more than ten. As if this weren't proof enough, Miss Del Rio was also responsible for lawyer Weissberger's becoming a photographer in the first place. Many years ago, it seems, Mr. Weissberger was walking with Miss Del Rio in Central Park. Miss Del Rio was intrigued by the seals. "Look at those brows," she said, "just like mine." On the spur of the moment, Mr. Weissberger took some pictures of the seals and some of Miss Del Rio. When he got them back, he was thrilled. "Gee," he recalls saying to himself, "I'm a great photographer." When he got back his next batch of pictures—of someone else—he was crushed. "I had to admit," he said, "it wasn't just the person in back of the camera. The person in front was pretty important, too."

TV HI-LITE—as located by Dr. George Flenner of Hamilton, Ohio, in *The Cincinnati Enquirer*:

> 8:30 P.M., 12, IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR: 1941. The attack on Pearl Harbor and America's participation in World War II featured.

So what else is good?

FILLER-UP DEPT.—as uncovered by Fiona Sutton in *The Boston Globe*:

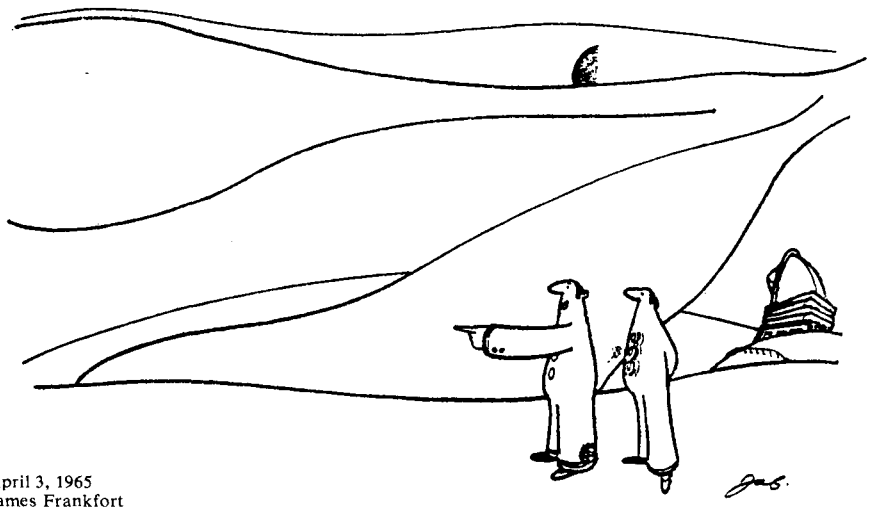
> James Bryant of Spartanburg, S.C., will be buried July 27. The delay is insignificant, since Bryant's body has been "upstairs, standing in a corner dressed with a hat on," for the past three and one-half years, according to the local mortician. The body had been unidentified until a visiting beautician, Mrs. Martha Evans, by chance saw the body and discovered it was her brother-in-law.

Okay, okay, but why the *hat*?

O TEMPORA DEPT.—as filed by Ms. Patricia Joralemon of Livingston, N.J., from the West Essex (N.J.) *Tribune*:

> Dear Sir:
>
> The disgusting craze of Streaking has dashed on the American scene. It is another twisted manifestation of the depraved liberal element which is destroying our nation. The decent upstanding citizens of our community are being subjected to public lewdness and unrestrained filth.
>
> Reports have reached me that our town has been ravaged by the plague of Streaking. Bamberger's, at the Livingston Mall, was attacked by a lone Streaker. Had I not seen this repulsive act of perversion with my own eyes, I would not have believed it. I have been informed of other occasions where nude runners have showed disrespect for the law and contempt for sane social values. I shall not comment on those local instances because of their unconfirmed nature.
>
> The illness of Streaking is only equaled by drug use, wanton promiscuity, and radical leftist political activity. If we are to rid our society of these diseases we must unite behind our law enforcement officials and the systems of courts. I call for strict penalties for those caught Streaking. We must use major surgery to cut out a growing malignancy. . . .
>
> James M. Harris
> Livingston, N.J.

Just what kind of surgery, sir, did you have in mind? □



April 3, 1965
James Frankfort

"You make a left turn of the century, another left at the last epoch, and walk straight into the millennium."

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(Continued from page 10.)

early advertisement, if not the first, for the Book-of-the-Month Club appeared in *SRL* for April 24, 1926, proclaiming, "You can now subscribe to the new books—just as you do to a magazine." The Book-of-the-Month Club's selections were to be chosen by a panel of distinguished judges, of which the chairman was no less a personage than Henry Seidel Canby. Christopher Morley was also a member (the others were Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Heywood Broun, and William Allen White); and Amy Loveman joined the staff of the club, either at the outset or soon after, to direct the winnowing and advance reading of the books submitted in order to make the task of the judges manageable. Possibly, at first, the Book-of-the-Month Club jobs constituted a form of moonlighting; but as the club grew, the jobs took on more and more importance for those who held them. It would be unfair to imply that this club activity detracted from the attention paid by Canby, Morley, and Miss Loveman to *SRL*; but of the three, Amy Loveman was the only one who had been a full-time member of the *SRL* staff, and she was entirely capable of holding down two jobs at once, most competently. In any event, reading new books was part of the job of all three, and there was no reason for a conflict of interest.

Incidentally, in 1927 the Book-of-the-Month Club acquired a competitor in the Literary Guild. This is not the place for a history of book clubs, but it is worth noting that in 1927 the Guild did more advertising—conspicuously more—in *SRL* than did the Book-of-the-Month Club, despite the presence of *SRL* editors among the club's judges.

To return: Morley, for one, was soon to put another iron in the fire—an adventure in theatrical production, in which he was associated with three others. They rented a theater in Hoboken, N.J., which in spite of Prohibition had not lost its tradition of good, honest beer. After one or two trial balloons, they opened Dion Boucicault's spectacular melodrama, *After Dark: or, Neither Maid, Wife, nor Widow,* on December 10, 1928. Thenceforward, well into the following year, *SRL* carried advertisements for this early Off-Broadway venture, which read "Seidel Over to Hoboken" and were drawn in the shape of beer mugs. One who saw *After Dark* several times can testify to its enduring human interest—although the effect may not have been quite what Boucicault intended—as well as to the quality of the forbidden fruit juice. *After Dark* was eventually succeeded by a less successful venture, an inadequately prepared revival of *The Black Crook*, a musical melodrama of the mid-nineteenth century. Finally Hoboken lost its appeal, and in any event Prohibition was to come to an end in 1933.

Meanwhile, Morley had started another column, "Trade Winds," signed P[arvis] E. G[landibus] Quercus, which was supposed to be about publishing and bookselling—and occasionally was—but, like Morley's other ventures, took a wayward course. Benét had been running, anonymously, what he called "A Shirtsleeves History" of current literary endeavor under the title QWERTYUIOP (the letters on the top line of the typewriter keys, read from left to right). Rereading portions of it today somehow does not bring back the flavor of the Twenties. In general, it must be admitted that the atmosphere of that decade is better represented by H. L. Mencken.

Early in the Thirties *SRL* was (by no means uniquely) hit by the depression. Cathcart promptly introduced significant economies. In addition, he decided that the time had come to give *SRL* a more forceful character—although a program that would do this was bound to offset the economies. He consulted at least one influential book publisher, who told him that if the circulation could be raised to 50,000 and maintained at that level, he and perhaps other publishers would regard it as a medium for the advertising of books, which would correspond in the United States to the position of the *Times Literary Supplement* in England. At the time *SRL*'s circulation had fallen below 20,000. Cathcart brought in the present writer to stimulate publishers to advertise more. At the same time, he brought in John Chamberlain from *The New York Times* to act as managing editor. Chamberlain lasted only a few months; the *Times*, possessing its full share of human nature, decided that if somebody else wanted Chamberlain, they did, too. So they brought him back to conduct a department that book publishers had for years been begging them to establish: a daily book review column. This rapidly became influential and successful and no doubt siphoned off a considerable amount of the book advertising for which *SRL* had been hoping.

Bily Snel
September 12, 1953

Chamberlain was around long enough to give *SRL* a definitely journalistic flavor, with emphasis on books as news. I was lucky enough to be appointed, in 1933, to succeed Chamberlain, and I tried to continue his policy: in choice of books for review, in choice of reviewers, in style of headings, in general emphasis. Not that this was in any way revolutionary; there was certainly no overhaul of the reviewers' list—men like Allan Nevins and Elmer Davis were no strangers to journalism and were valued contributors to many periodicals other than *SRL*.

As to choice of books for review, we had a peculiar advantage. By this time—1933 and '34—publishers were submitting their important books (also some of their unimportant books) to the Book-of-the-Month Club in proof, rather than waiting for the finished book; and the club, which had started with *Lolly Willowes* by Sylvia Townsend Warner as its first selection in April 1926 (the book having been published by the Viking Press in March), was now making its selections long in advance of publication. This meant that Amy Loveman, as editor of the club, was familiar with the cream, as well as a good deal of the milk, of current book production long before bound copies for review arrived in our office. Amy herself never lost the touch of the newspaper woman; she was excited by everything that went on in the newspaper world, and owing to her experience, she was in a position to call on veterans from the staffs of the New York papers.

Just the same, anyone who goes through the files of the issues of 40 years ago cannot help being struck by the change of emphasis. At Cathcart's instigation, the format was changed; we halved the overall size; doubled the number of pages; and had a pictorial cover in

(Continued on page 61.)

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Prices shown are publishers' U.S. prices.
Outside the U.S., prices are generally somewhat higher.

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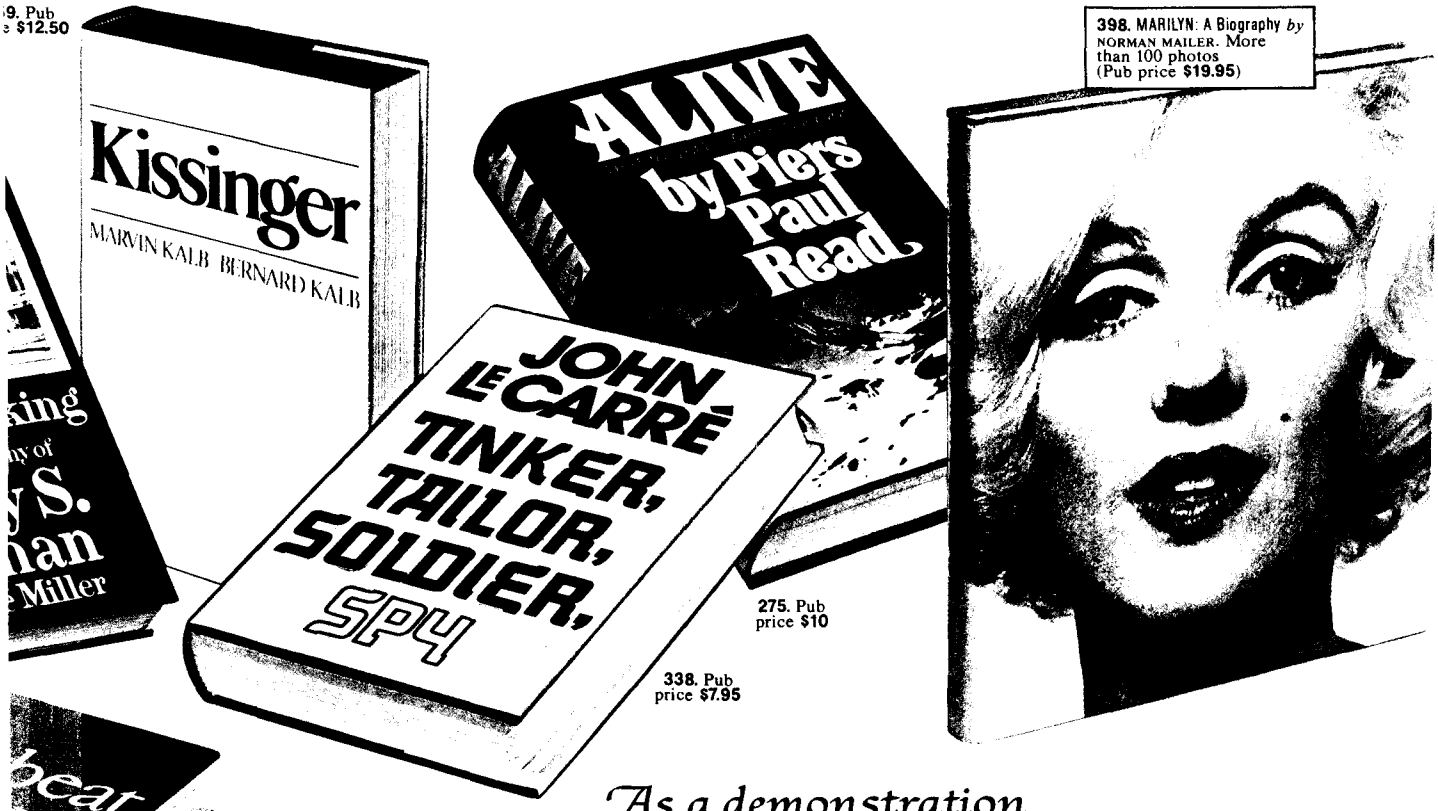

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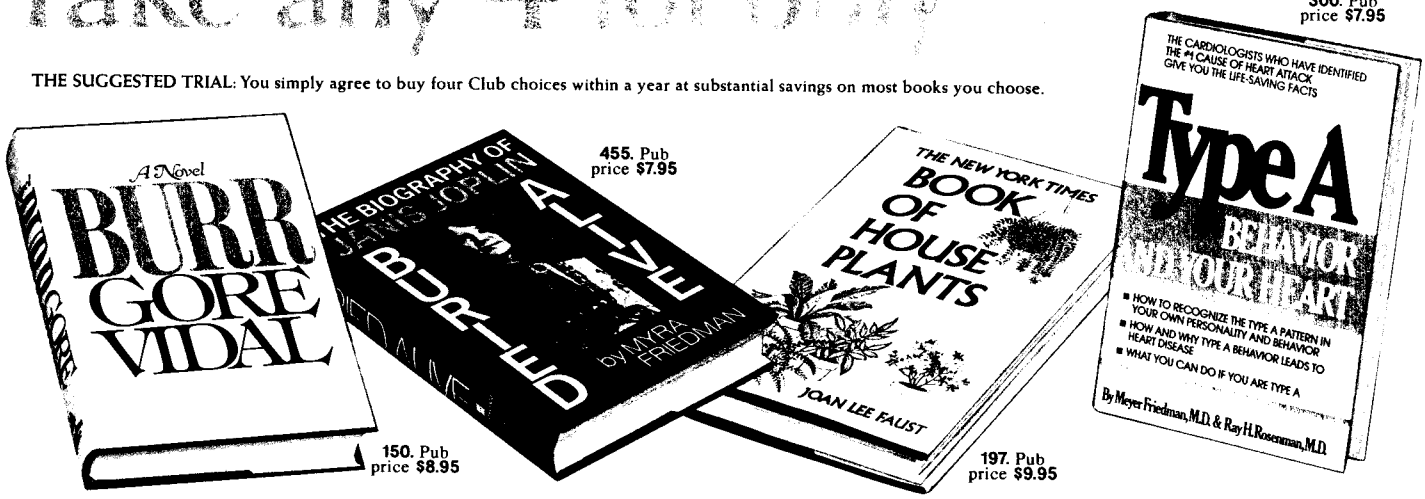
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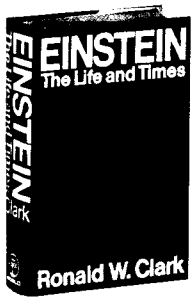

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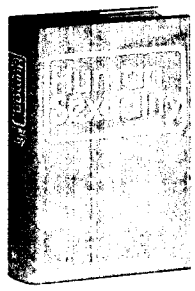

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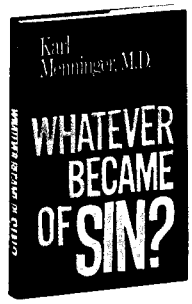

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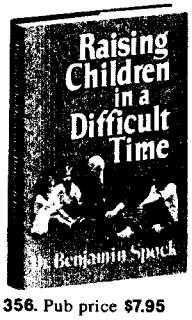

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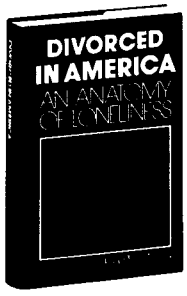

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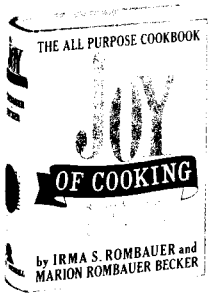

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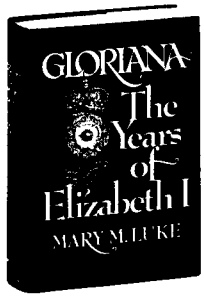

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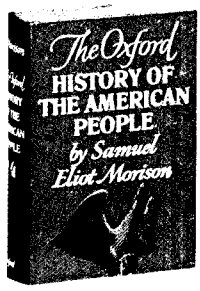

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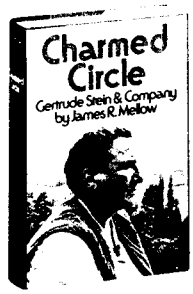

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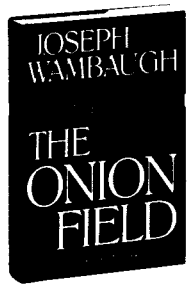

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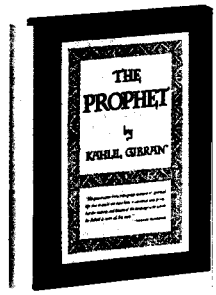

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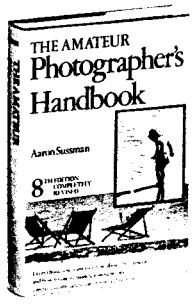

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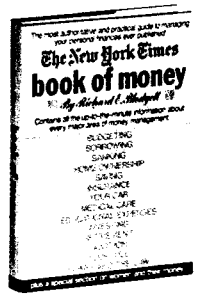

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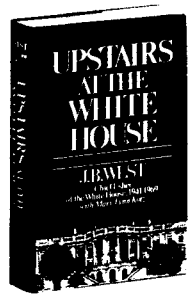

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two colors, the picture being one of the author of what we considered an important book of the week or of the book most interestingly reviewed in that issue. In short, we were featuring books, not editorials. But we were not beating the depression. In those days of lean pickings, it was too easy for a publisher to dominate a page with a small ad.

Another dramatic development was to come in 1936. Meanwhile a few spots, high and low, may deserve mention. Amy and I used to put *SRL* to bed every Monday night at the printer's: reading last-minute proof, making cuts so that the text would fit the available space, inserting last-minute engravings that were delivered at perhaps 10:00 or 11:00 P.M. On one occasion we had reproduced from an art book a black-and-white photograph of Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase.* The cut arrived for the space awaiting it but without the book from which we had reproduced the picture; and neither Amy nor I had the remotest idea which end was up. Naturally, we guessed wrong and ran the picture of this prehistoric streaker upside down. We got a resounding and merry laugh in the form of correspondence from our readers.

In those days the New Deal was making news; early in 1934 a book by FDR called *On Our Way* was published. We printed four reviews written from different points of view, under an eight-column head on page one (old format): "On Our Way—but Where Are We Going?" This attracted attention, which was welcome indeed; and it seems in retrospect to have been what is called a good question.

It was also early in 1934 that a publishing friend sent Mrs. Elizabeth S. Kingsley to us. I take credit, as an old crossword-puzzle addict, for seeing the fascination of her invention: Double-Crostics (my title, if I may continue to boast). The first one ran in the issue of March 31, 1934. Mrs. Kingsley was a delightful widow who might have been created by Trollope. We paid her ten dollars a puzzle. One hopes Mr. Thomas H. Middleton is raking in a bit more than that.

One morning in June 1935 (by now we had the new format, begun with the issue of May 4) Noble Cathcart and Chris Morley were observed intently going over a piece of copy. It was a "Bowling Green" piece, and it was to appear in our issue of June 29 under the title "Picking Up Corn." A columnist named O. O. McIntyre had for years been lifting choice expressions of Chris's, and Chris had been silently and patiently accumulating them. McIntyre had recently published a book called *The Big Town: New York Day by Day,* which Bill Benét had reviewed briefly, and a bit naïvely, perhaps; he said that McIntyre displayed an original turn of phrase. This was too much for Chris; he unloaded his bag, and what a bag it was. Parallel columns of considerable length were devastating. The piece got front-page attention in the press; and E. B. White wrote in *The New Yorker* that Chris had "caught Mr. McIntyre with his pince-nez down."

"No doubt about it, DeVoto really stirred up the animals—the illustrious Edmund Wilson among them."

In 1935 the opportunity came to us—was it through the author's agent?—to serialize, in three successive issues, Thomas Wolfe's short book *The Story of a Novel.* The issues were those of December 14, 21, and 28. Wolfe had during that year published his second novel, *Of Time and the River.* The first, *Look Homeward, Angel,* had been extravagantly praised. Now, in accordance with a custom seldom breached, he was coming in for the reaction that awaits the second novel of a successful first novelist. This pretty much took the form of accusations that Wolfe depended far too much on his editor (Maxwell E. Perkins of Scribner's, to whom *Of Time and the River* was dedicated) to bring order out of his chaotic manuscripts. It also struck some critics that Wolfe had again, as indeed he had with *Look Homeward, Angel,* stuck too literally close to life in his characterizations of his family and acquaintances, leaving his imagination to the composition of impassioned prose that could be turgid as well as eloquent. In any event, *The Story of a Novel* was a good job: intelligent, truthful, convincing.

But this was not to be the last word. When *The Story of a Novel* was published as a book, *SRL* turned it over to Bernard DeVoto for review. The result was a long essay-review that was DeVoto at his most characteristic: pugnacious and devastating. It was called "Genius Is Not Enough." Naturally, this piece was given the leading position in the issue (April 25, 1936); and we illustrated it with a photograph of DeVoto in shirt-sleeves, standing, grinning broadly, and holding a Colt .45, apparently in readiness to take aim and fire. The central idea of DeVoto's article was that Wolfe did not distinguish between the important and the trivial in the emotional treatment he expended on the various episodes. I recall the statement, "If the death of a man's father comes out emotionally even with a ham on rye, then the art of fiction is cockeyed."

Enter DeVoto. It was in the previous year, 1935, that Noble Cathcart, no doubt after consultation with Mr. Lamont, had decided that what *SRL* needed was a new editor. He let me in on his plan, but not the rest of the staff; to have done so would inevitably have started a buzz of gossip that would have done *SRL* no good. The story of DeVoto as editor of *SRL* has been told in full, and accurately, in Wallace Stegner's recent biography of DeVoto, *The Uneasy Chair.* Before joining *SRL,* DeVoto had been a member of the English department at Harvard; he was then hoping for, and counting on, an appointment that would have given him tenure. I went to Cambridge in November 1935 to sound out DeVoto, and I received a declination as definite as it was courteous. We looked elsewhere; by Christmas it developed that Harvard's new president, James B. Conant, had no intention of giving DeVoto a permanent appointment. He called me, asked if we had filled the editor's chair, and on learning that we had not, asked to be considered again. After sundry preliminaries, DeVoto became editor with the issue of September 26, 1936.

There is much more to this story, but it has been covered not only in Stegner's book, but even more recently in Norman Cousins's editorial-review of that book in the issue of *SR/W* for April 6 of this year. There is no doubt that DeVoto came prepared to do his level best; but he also came regarding the job as a *pis aller,* out of his disappointment in Cambridge. And it turned out that he was a writing editor rather than an editing editor. As always, he wrote most effectively, except during the summer of 1937, which—owing to a misunderstanding—he felt entitled to spend in Vermont, where he composed a series of

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long, dull editorials (which I made even duller by heading them "English '37") about the craft of fiction. This was not DeVoto's strong subject, although he had dogmatic ideas about it; his preoccupation was American history, which showed in much of his own writing for *SRL*. Once when we needed a leading article for the Christmas issue (December 5, 1936), he batted out "From Christmas to Christmas with Lewis and Clark."

The outstanding issue during DeVoto's regime was that of November 21, 1936. Doubleday had recently issued—assuredly *published* is not the word—*The Mint* by "A/c Ross" (T. E. Lawrence, or Lawrence of Arabia, who had written *The Revolt in the Desert* and *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*). *The Mint* was supposed to be so explosive that it could not be released for public consumption until 1950. The price was $500,000 a copy. One late afternoon, over drinks at the Harvard Club, DeVoto and Cathcart and I were brooding over the desirability of overcoming the difficulty of reviewing the book and wondering how it could be done. Suddenly I happened to remember that back in the Twenties, a Pittsburgh reporter had ingeniously exposed the secret rules and other flimflam of the Ku Klux Klan by going to the Library of Congress and looking at a copy of the KKK booklet that had been entered for copyright. Well, why couldn't we do the same? *The Mint* was copyrighted, wasn't it? So as soon as possible, we dispatched Mr. Canby to Washington. He accepted the assignment with alacrity and promptly returned with an interesting piece—probably the most distinguished exclusive *SRL* ever published. At least one Doubleday executive was annoyed, as I recall.*

However, a bit of the edge was taken off when just before we were ready to go to press, the Nobel Prize was awarded to Eugene O'Neill. This in a way was even bigger news than *The Mint*. DeVoto at once turned out a long article, which he called "Minority Report," taking issue with the Scandinavian authorities. I remember his referring to O'Neill as "this Model T Euripides." His article stirred up more than those few executives at Doubleday. In retrospect, I think that instead of running both the review of *The Mint* and the O'Neill piece in the same issue, we should have done well to hold up the former for a week—but we were afraid, knowing that our plans had leaked, that we ourselves would be scooped. Anyhow, it was a memorable issue.

No doubt about it, DeVoto really stirred up the animals—the illustrious Edmund Wilson among them. He also mounted really devastating assaults on the "proletarian literature" propaganda that came out of the depression, and he attacked a number of writers who thought the New Deal was not enough and who became known (quite unjustly in many cases) as "fellow travelers." But in spite of these accomplishments, DeVoto was not successful as the editor of *SRL*. Maybe at that time nobody could have been.

Nor could DeVoto's successor, the author of this article, do more than keep the magazine on its feet. I took over as editor with the issue of March 5, 1938. In his *American Memoir,* Henry Seidel Canby, although he passes rather glibly over the transition from himself to DeVoto, accurately accounts for the transition from DeVoto to Stevens:

> I remember well the evening—in 1938, I think it was—when all the associates of the *Review* met for dinner in the Union League Club at the invitation of Mr. Lamont. It was to be a mortuary dinner; of that I had no doubt. But as the evening lengthened, we talked with such rich memories, with so much affection for our past, with such pride in the *Review*, that I felt this burial at least was to be worthy of the spirit of our hopes.

As it turned out, Mr. Lamont made arrangements that gave *SRL* a year of grace, under my editorship. Let Mr. Canby proceed:

> It was later, almost too late, that in a casual meeting in Central Park with my old friend Molly Colum [Mrs. Padraic Colum], I learned that an old acquaintance of mine, Harrison Smith, was forming a group of magazines. He took over the *Review*, effected economies in production, and found on his own staff that first requisite, a new editor, a modest young fellow, historian and educator by training, who at first would not allow himself to be called editor-in-chief. Norman Cousins had precisely the right outlook, the capacity, and the creative skill for the new times.

Actually, Hal Smith and his associates kept me on as editor through 1939, with never a hint that they might welcome my departure. Cathcart left, becoming assistant to the president of The Crowell-Collier Publishing Company; but Canby, Miss Loveman, and Benét stayed on, and Morley was listed as a contributing editor into 1941. I resigned in 1940 to return to book publishing, whence I had come seven years earlier, and with goodwill on the part of all concerned. I look upon my two years as editor more or less as if I had been the head of a caretaker government, and as GBS left another *Saturday Review* with greetings to "the incomparable Max," I took pleasure in greeting the incomparable Norman.

The rest of the story is his. □

*This is the story as I remember it, and as DeVoto gave it in his "Easy Chair" department in *Harper's* for June 1955. But the heading over Canby's review says that we had been making inquiries of the Library of Congress in 1935.

Robert Censoni
December 20, 1969

" 'Playboy' and a copy of 'SR' to carry it home in."

Collage by Carol Wald
1920 photographs, courtesy of Brandon Memorabilia
Painting of King by Joszef Szabo, courtesy of Paramount Line

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Scrapbook

Browsing Through SR's First 50 Years

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Debuts—The '20s and '30s. *Books still appeared without ballyhoo—and without benefit of six-figure sales to Hollywood. An unknown writer named Hemingway or Faulkner could still slip onto the review pile almost unnoticed. And it was a challenge for the critic to discern a big name while it was still in small print. The magazine's reviewers of this period made some good discoveries, but they were not invariably endowed with perfect vision.*

Hemingway

IN OUR TIME by ERNEST HEMINGWAY. Boni & Liveright. $2.

Reviewed by LOUIS KRONENBERGER

Ernest Hemingway's first book of short stories comes fortified with the praise of men like Sherwood Anderson, Ford Madox Ford, Waldo Frank, and John Dos Passos. The praise of such men fosters deduction. It indicates that Mr. Hemingway must have merit; it implies that his work is experimental, original, modernistic; it may even suggest that his work stems in part from the modes set by their own creation. All these deductions are to some extent true, but only the first is important. There are obvious traces of Sherwood Anderson in Mr. Hemingway and there are subtler traces of Gertrude Stein. . . .

I think it should be emphasized that Mr. Hemingway's stories are as much an achievement as they are an experiment. Already he has succeeded in making some of them finished products, whose form is consonant with their substance and whose value is not an implication for the future but a realization in the present. It is true that he has no power of emotion or deep quality of cerebration, but the way he has observed people and things, speech, surroundings, atmosphere, the spirit of our times, constitutes sufficient accomplishment for the moment. When translated into words, this power of observation is doubly effective: it is precise and direct; it is also suggestive and illuminating. Almost wholly through his sense of observation, he gets life into these pages: life at any moment, life at a vivid moment, life at a high and crucial moment. At his best, getting it there for a moment's duration, he somehow sends it running backward and forward, so that whatever must be understood is comprehensible by a discerning reader.

For the rest, his stories are experiments demanding further discipline and art. Between each two he interposes a paragraph of bare incident which further suggests the spirit of our time. Unfortunately some of the stories themselves, in their form and meaning, are like those paragraphs. They imply significance but they do not attain it; their lacunae are greater than their substance. They are not without life, but they lack meaning and intensity. Mr. Hemingway is in some respects an "intellectual" writer—in his culture, his humor, his implicit sophistication, his objectivity; but his work itself is finest when it portrays life, conversation, action. He is a synthetic observer, not an analyst. *February 13, 1926*

Faulkner

SOLDIER'S PAY by WILLIAM FAULKNER. Boni & Liveright. $2.

Reviewed by THOMAS BOYD

. . . Mr. Faulkner submits to very little government in writing. His impressionistic manner is honest but slap-dash; often he sets down an extraordinarily vivid scene. The book has fervor and strength, but it would be more effective if it were better controlled. So far as the returned soldier is concerned Larry Barreto made a much better job of him in "A Conqueror Passes."

April 24, 1926

Van Dine

THE BENSON MURDER CASE by S. S. VAN DINE. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.

Reviewed by DASHIELL HAMMETT

. . . Alvin Benson is found sitting in a wicker chair in his living room, a book still in his hand, his legs crossed, and his body comfortably relaxed in a lifelike position. He is dead. A bullet from an Army model Colt .45 automatic pistol, held some six feet away when the trigger was pulled, has passed completely through his head. That his position should have been so slightly disturbed by the impact of such a bullet at such a range is preposterous, but the phenomenon hasn't anything to do with the plot, so don't, as I did, waste time trying to figure it out. The murderer's identity becomes obvious quite early in the story. The authorities, no matter how stupid the author chose to make them, would have cleared up the mystery promptly if they had been allowed to follow the most rudimentary police routine. But then what would there have been for the gifted Vance to do?

This Philo Vance is in the Sherlock Holmes tradition and his conversational manner is that of a high-school girl who has been studying the foreign words and phrases

Salutation

by T. S. ELIOT

The Hand of the Lord Was Upon Me:—*e vo significando.*
Lady, three white leopards sat under a juniper tree
In the cool of the day, having fed to satiety
On my legs, my heart, my liver and that which had been contained
In the hollow round of my skull. And God said
Shall these bones live? Shall these
Bones live? And that which had been contained
In the bones (which were already dry) said chirping:
Because of the goodness of this Lady
And because of her loveliness, and because
She honors the Virgin in meditation,
We shine with brightness. And I who am here dissembled
Proffer my deeds to oblivion, and my love
To the posterity of the desert and the fruit of the gourd.
It is this which recovers
My guts, the strings of my eyes, and the indigestible portions
Which the leopards reject. The Lady is withdrawn
In a white gown, to contemplation, in a white gown.
Let the whiteness of bones atone to forgetfulness.
There is no life in them. As I am forgotten
And would be forgotten, so I would forget
Thus devoted, concentrated in purpose. And God said
Prophesy to the wind, to the wind only for only
The wind will listen. And the bones sang chirping
With the burden of the grasshopper, saying

Lady of silences
Calm and distressed
Torn and most whole
Rose of memory
Rose of forgetfulness
Spattered and worshipped
Exhausted and life-giving
Worried reposeful
The single Rose
With worm eaten petals
Is now the Garden
Where all loves end
Terminate torment
Of love unsatisfied
The greater torment
Of love satisfied
End of the endless
Journey to no end
Conclusion of all that
Is inconclusible
Speech without word and
Word of no speech
Grace to the Mother
For the end of remembering
End of forgetting
For the Garden
Where all love ends.

Under a juniper tree the bones sang, scattered and shining.
We are glad to be scattered, we did little good to each other.
Under a tree in the cool of the day, with the blessing of sand.

Forgetting themselves and each other, united
In the quiet of the desert. This is the land
Which ye shall divide by lot. And neither
Division nor unity matter. This is the land.
We have our inheritance.

December 10, 1927

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in the back of her dictionary. He is a bore when he discusses art and philosophy, but when he switches to criminal psychology he is delightful. There is a theory that anyone who talks enough on any subject must, if only by chance, finally say something not altogether incorrect. Vance disproves this theory: he manages always, and usually ridiculously, to be wrong. His exposition of the technique employed by a gentleman shooting another gentleman who sits six feet in front of him deserves a place in a *How to be a detective by mail* course.

To supply this genius with a field for his operations the author has to treat his policemen abominably. He doesn't let them ask any questions that aren't wholly irrelevant. They can't make inquiries of anyone who might know anything. They aren't permitted to take any steps toward learning whether the dead man was robbed. Their fingerprint experts are excluded from the scene of the crime. When information concerning a mysterious box of jewelry accidentally bobs up everybody resolutely ignores it, since it would have led to a solution before the three-hundredth page.

Mr. Van Dine doesn't deprive his officials of every liberty, however: he generously lets them compete with Vance now and then in the expression of idiocies. . . .

January 15, 1927

Farrell

YOUNG LONIGAN by JAMES T. FARRELL. Vanguard. $3.75.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

The latest stern realism that has come our way is James T. Farrell's "Young Lonigan," which is published in a special edition the sale of which is limited to physicians, surgeons, psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists, social workers, teachers, and other persons having a professional interest in the psychology of adolescence. Also the price is three seventy-five, enough to turn most book-buyers away. It is the story of a Catholic boy's boyhood in Chicago streets. It is unsparing but James Hanley's "Boy" (Knopf) certainly tops it for brutality. Both books make life seem particularly horrible. They are endeavors at the truth, and in that respect laudable. "Young Lonigan" is most like a photograph of the lives of the hoodlums one runs into occasionally whooping through subway trains or along streets at night, the tough, ignorant, callous rabble who yet experience sometimes a real love hemmed in by superstitious fear.

April 30, 1932

O'Hara

APPOINTMENT IN SAMARRA by JOHN O'HARA. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $2.50.

Reviewed by SINCLAIR LEWIS

Here in the Vermont hills, this September, I have been reading four opera all mixed together: "Appointment in Samarra," the recent first novel by Mr. John O'Hara; a review of that novel, by Mr. Henry Seidel Canby; "The Age of Confidence," a biographical history of the 90's by the same Canby; and "Kubla Khan," by Mr. Coleridge. (But—no—to the grief of all judicious men in the business of professing English, I did *not* get the most excitement, the greatest invocation of beauty, from the last of these!)

I started out with Mr. Canby's review of Mr. O'Hara's novel. I gathered that he did not like Mr. O'Hara's novel. He said, among other indignant things, "There is a thorough-going vulgarity in this book, characteristic of its class, which is a symptom of a lack of knowledge of the novelist's real art . . . an insufferable vulgarity which has crept into so many of our supposedly advanced novels that someone not squeamish, not unread in earlier literature, must protest against what is cheapening American fiction. . . . No excuse for making what they call art out of plumbing. . . . Do they think we are going to be content with sour pap like this?"

I sighed, then. "It's the same old story. This Canby is another academician. He has the same startled-fawn naiveté that contemporary reviewers exhibited when Hawthorne discovered that clergymen may sin, when Howells hinted that even handsome young American lovers may wear pantaloons and suspenders instead of azure robes, when Dreiser grumbled that ladies of uncertain reputation—which, of course, means of a decidedly certain reputation—may yet be practically human, and when Mark Twain asserted that youths of the hobo class sometimes say 'damn.' They always scold thus at anything new and fresh and fine."

But then, unfortunately, I read "Appointment in Samarra," and there wasn't anything new or fresh or fine about it, and Mr. Canby was completely right. Most of the Advanced Reviewers had whooped for Mr. O'Hara, lest they be thought timid and virginal . . . a crime now as shameful as unvirginality two decades ago. Mr. Canby was one of the few ranking critics who had the sense to see that this book, for all the cleverness of its observation, the deftness of its tempo, the courage of its vocabulary, was inherently nothing but infantilism—the erotic visions of a hobbledehoy behind the barn, even though the barn does figure in the novel as a "country club."

But Mr. Canby did not sufficiently condemn the title of the book, which is bad art, atrocious philosophy, and—since it is both meaningless and difficult to remember—shockingly bad box-office. In this Coolidge-neighboring Vermont, since we could never remember whether it was Assignment in Samarra, or Absurdity or Appointment or Action or Asininity or Abomination or Androgyny in Samarra, we finally christened the book "Assignation in Abyssinia," as being both easier to remember and more accurate as an analysis of the contents.

October 6, 1934

"He says Thomas Wolfe has no real stature."

James Thurber
July 17, 1937

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World War II provided a launching pad for talents as diverse as those of Arthur Miller and Norman Mailer. Others, like William Styron and James Baldwin, explored a more private past in their literary debuts. Those debuts were now often heralded by loud fanfare. Magazine previews, the benediction of book clubs, and the panache of publicity made it less likely that an undetected planet would swim into the reviewer's ken.

Hersey

A BELL FOR ADANO by JOHN HERSEY. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

"This is quick work," I said to myself, as I read on the jacket that John Hersey had spent three summer months of 1943 in Italy and had then returned home to write a novel based on his experience with our invasion forces. "Probably too quick," I added. With that prejudice I began to read the book itself, and my prejudice began to vanish like mist.

In "Men on Bataan" and "Into the Valley" Mr. Hersey proved himself a first-rate reporter while giving signs of being and becoming something more. It is the more that we have here, or the beginning of it; and while the fact of his development may not surprise perspicacious readers, I think its character will. There was no more reason to predict that Mr. Hersey would write the kind of fiction he has written than there was to foresee that the first novel concerned with the activities of our Allied Military Government would be one of the gayest books imaginable. For that is what it is, this story of Major Victor Joppolo's tour of duty as civil affairs officer for the little Italian town of Adano. It is not only gay, mind you. It is also serious. But whatever its seriousness of intention and execution, stressed in a foreword, you will be laughing much of the time you are reading it, and smiling most of the time. Which is not to say you will miss hearing the message the author would have you hear. . . .

February 12, 1944

Miller

SITUATION NORMAL . . . by ARTHUR MILLER. Reynal & Hitchcock. $2.

Reviewed by MAURICE BASSECHES

You would hardly expect to find one of the most important books about America and the war in the notes of a virtually unknown young movie writer to his Hollywood producer; but that is just what happens in this unheralded little volume.

"Situation Normal . . . ," then, is a story within a story. Lester Cowan, the producer, wanted "GI Joe," his picture based on the columns of Ernie Pyle, to be the true account of America's ground soldiers; one that was free of flag-waving and film cliches, one that our fighting men themselves could see with belief and pride. For the script he hired a twenty-nine-year-old New York playwright who was unspoiled by the traditional Hollywood treatment of the war. Then Mr. Cowan got permission from the War Department to send Mr. Miller through several army camps in this country for authentic raw material.

"Situation Normal . . ." is a bundle of notes compiled by Mr. Miller as he watched and talked to American soldiers as inductees, infantrymen, tankmen, paratroopers, and officer candidates at work and at ease in places like Fort Dix, Camp Croft, and Fort Benning. This may seem like old hat at this stage of the war, but Mr. Miller more than compensates for this with a fresh eye, keen mind, and an uncommon writing talent. . . .

December 2, 1944

Capote

OTHER VOICES, OTHER ROOMS by TRUMAN CAPOTE. Random House. $2.75.

Reviewed by RICHARD MCLAUGHLIN

For years now we have had it drummed into us that the South is decaying. With the exception of the novels of Ellen Glasgow, Caroline Gordon, Stark Young, and Margaret Mitchell, we have a difficult time trying to visualize crinolines, magnolia blossoms, and barbecues ever having existed below the Mason and Dixon line. And certainly Truman Capote's novel does not suggest that young Southern novelists are inclined to look any more cheerfully on their sunny land this year than last.

Against the somewhat creaking, musty backdrop of the Louisiana swamplands, replete with rotting Spanish moss, toadstools, spider webs, crumbling, dilapidated old Southern mansions, and the pitter-patter of ghostly feet dancing on the dusty ballroom floor, Truman Capote unfolds his incredible little tale of Southern decay. Perhaps if we had not seen how skilfully and successfully Mr. Capote handled his frightening nightmare world of devil-children and escaped lunatics in his short stories, we would not be half so disappointed in the way he has put together various macabre elements for a full-length novel. Where the highly effective and carefully credited mood of terror and awful sense of evil in his short stories could hold a reader for a half hour's sitting, these same character creations in a novel appear more often like caricatures of nasty people whose actions and mannerisms fail to intrigue or terrify us.

It would appear that instead of writing a cohesive narrative of people who move in a region where the dream world exists side by side with the familiar and commonplace, Mr. Capote, for all his deftness in creating an image, has concocted a witch's brew which boils and boils to no avail. In fact, readers weary of reading about the South's decline are apt to accuse Mr. Capote of dishing up a Dixieland stew in which Faulkner, Caldwell, Welty, shades of the defunct *View* magazine, Charles Addams's weirdies, Proust's most celebrated passages, all seem to have gone. This is regrettable since Mr. Capote *does* have a remarkable facility with words; he can make perfectly normal horrors and shocks appear like enormities upon the senses. At times we can even hear a haunting, funereal music behind Mr. Capote's wayward language.

February 14, 1948

Mailer

THE NAKED AND THE DEAD by NORMAN MAILER. Rinehart & Co. $4.

Reviewed by MAXWELL GEISMAR

Just when we have stopped talking about the new literary voices of the 1940's, they seem to be appearing. Norman Mailer is a young American writer who grew up in Brooklyn, went to Harvard, and found himself, as a rifleman, in Leyte and Japan. His earlier work has appeared in *Story* magazine and "Cross Section," but "The Naked and the Dead" is his first novel. It is a solid and interesting story of the capture of Anopopei, a typical Japanese island in the Pacific, a nightmare in short.

Mr. Mailer uses some of the technical devices which John Dos Passos initiated in the American novel, while there is also an influence of tone. But "Three Soldiers," like most of the typical stories of World War I, was essentially a novel of individual protest. The military organization was something to escape from, not to understand. The virtue of "The Naked and the Dead"—and I think it will be the typical pattern of the new war novels—is that it sees the individual within the military organization, and attempts to evaluate the whole complex structure of the American Army in war and peace, as a manifestation of contemporary society, as well as a weapon of conquest and destruction. Or perhaps even, in the Tolstoyan sense, as one-half of our "natural" existence. . . .

Mr. Mailer leans rather heavily on the sexual experiences of his lower-class figures, too; these may be a solace for the common man, and even a source of

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Parker
July 7, 1951

"I'm afraid I was somewhat misled by the title . . ."

strength, but they don't constitute his only achievement.

I think this is the main weakness of the novel, for there is no real balance of the dramatic forces in it, just as there is a final lack of emotional impact. The story ought to be more impressive than it is. Within these limits, however, "The Naked and the Dead" is a substantial work, and Mr. Mailer is a new novelist of consequence.

May 8, 1948

Jones

FROM HERE TO ETERNITY by JAMES JONES. Charles Scribner's Sons. $4.50.

Reviewed by NED CALMER

The ghost of Maxwell E. Perkins is hovering (perhaps a bit uneasily) over the debut of James Jones, a thirty-year-old first novelist who spent five years in the United States Army and then three years more writing a story 860 pages long about what he observed as a soldier. In a postscript Mr. Jones expresses his gratitude to the great Max for believing in him and gives a credit for editing help to Perkins's associates at Scribner's.

The respect seems mutual, for Mr. Jones's publishers declare the appearance of his novel can be compared with the first books of Thomas Wolfe and F. Scott Fitzgerald. That's an introduction that takes a good deal of living up to, but one reaction is already indicated: whatever its critical acclaim on purely literary merit, "From Here to Eternity" is likely to become the most talked-about novel of 1951. Its spectacularly indecent vocabulary assures that in advance. The Book-of-the-Month Club's editorial board, calling it one of the most impressive novels considered in many years, offers it to members as an alternate rather than a regular selection to forewarn that it's a book you might not want to leave lying around. Once that precaution is taken the gentle Max can rest easy. For the non-squeamish adult this is the best picture of Army life ever written by an American, a book of beauty and power despite its unevenness, a book full of the promise of great things to come.

It is the violent saga of some violent men who belonged in that tiny proportion of our population which up to World War II was the U.S. Army, more specifically still a company stationed in Hawaii whose bitter, brawling professional soldiers live out the months leading up to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The principal figures are Private Prewitt and Sergeant Warden, and the two women they love in cynical and transient fashion. Warden's affair with his captain's wife is conventional adultery in an exotic setting, but Prewitt's passion for Lorene, née Alma Schmidt, the spoiled goddess of a Honolulu brothel, seems destined to prove the most original love story of the year. By the time the novel reaches its climax in the wild chaos of the Pearl Harbor attack the love affairs are already over. Warden, who has rejected his chance at a commission, sees the company he knew disintegrating, while Prewitt meets death after almost unbelievably sordid, tragic adventures in barrack rooms, bars, and prison stockade. . . .

February 24, 1951

Styron

LIE DOWN IN DARKNESS by WILLIAM STYRON. Bobbs-Merrill Co. $3.50.

Reviewed by MAXWELL GEISMAR

. . . The trouble with John W. Aldridge's recent study of the New Writers was that by and large they were all writers of the second or third class. Mr. Styron's book, like the work of any genuine fresh talent, suddenly makes this clear and breaks through the conventions that are fashionable today.

First of all, "Lie Down in Darkness" has no "thesis." There is nothing in it about a "frame of reference" or the decline of values. It is simply a domestic tragedy, but a story that becomes completely absorbing and is treated with brilliance and boldness of insight. . . .

The novel is almost too well built; for, completely absorbing as it is and held as we are by the mounting tension in which every episode contributes the proper weight to the whole narrative, we miss, in the end, that sense of looseness through which the older novelists could pause in their story simply to view people as people and consider life itself in its extravagant and unforeseeable formlessness. Everything fits in here a little too closely.

Mr. Styron's danger, in the future at least, is in this area. To reverse Edmund Wilson's theory that the wound of the artist when subject to discipline becomes the bow or his strength as an artist, Mr. Styron's bow—his remarkable facility as a craftsman—may become his wound. "Lie Down in Darkness," though, for the present, is practically perfect.

September 15, 1951

Baldwin

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN by JAMES BALDWIN. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.50.

Reviewed by HARVEY CURTIS WEBSTER

. . . Mr. Baldwin's first novel is written as skilfully as many a man's fifth essay in fiction. His handling of the flashbacks so that they show the past without interrupting the drama of the present is masterful. His penetration of the mind of John, especially in the scene of his conversion, is as valid as anything in William James's "Varieties of Religious Experience" and as moving as the interior monologues in Faulkner's "As I Lay Dying." Although Mr. Baldwin does not have either Wright's or Ellison's capacity to take all modern problems as his province, he never descends into the provincialism that has made so many Negro novels read like footnotes to Myrdal's "An American Dilemma." "Go Tell It on the Mountain" fulfils a great deal, promises more. Mr. Baldwin's readers will hope for the quick (but not too quick) completion of the second novel, which he is writing at present.

May 16, 1953

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The Lost Generation. *World War I's disillusioning aftermath had supposedly left young Americans spiritually stranded, apostles merely of sex and drink, a lost generation. But on the printed page they did not lose their way.* Saturday Review *followed their progress closely and sympathetically. It was a time of new beginnings in American literature, and in 1934 editor Henry Seidel Canby could look back upon a decade of rich achievement.*

Fitzgerald

THE GREAT GATSBY by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.

Reviewed by William Rose Benét

. . . "The Great Gatsby" reveals thoroughly matured craftsmanship. It has structure. It has high occasions of felicitous, almost magic, phrase. And most of all, it is out of the mirage. For the first time Fitzgerald surveys the Babylonian captivity of this era unblinded by the bright lights. He gives you the bright lights in full measure, the affluence, the waste, but also the nakedness of the scaffolding that scrawls skeletons upon the sky when the gold and blue and red and green have faded, the ugly passion, the spiritual meagreness, the empty shell of luxury, the old irony of "fair-weather friends."

Gatsby remains. The mystery of Gatsby is a mystery saliently characteristic of this age in America. And Gatsby is only another modern instance of the eternal "fortunate youth." His actual age does not matter, in either sense. For all the cleverness of his hinted nefarious proceedings, he is the coney caught. For he is a man with a dream at the mercy of the foul dust that sometimes seems only to exist in order to swarm against the dream, whose midge-dance blots it from the sky. It is a strange dream, Gatsby's—but he was a man who had hope. He was a child. He believed in a childish thing.

It is because Fitzgerald makes so acid on your tongue the taste of the defeat of Gatsby's childishness that his book, in our opinion, "acquires merit." And there are parts of the book, notably the second chapter, that, in our opinion, could not have been better written. There are astonishing feats that no one but Fitzgerald could have brought off, notably the catalogue of guests in Chapter IV. And Tom Buchanan, the "great, big hulking specimen," is an American university product of almost unbearable reality.

Yet one feels that, though irony has entered into Fitzgerald's soul, the sense of mere wonder is still stronger. And, of course, there is plenty of entertainment in the story. It arises in part from the almost photographic reproduction of the actions, gestures, speech of the types Fitzgerald has chosen in their moments of stress. Picayune souls for the most part, and Gatsby heroic among them only because he is partly a crazy man with a dream. But what does all that matter with the actual narration so vivid and graphic? As for the drama of the accident and Gatsby's end, it is the kind of thing newspapers carry every day, except that here is a novelist who has gone behind the curt paragraphs and made the real people live and breathe in all their sordidness. They are actual, rich and poor, cultivated and uncultivated, seen for a moment or two only or followed throughout the story. They are memorable individuals of today—not types.

Perhaps you have gathered that we like the book! We do. It has some miscues, but they seem to us negligible. It is written with concision and precision and mastery of material.

May 9, 1925

Dos Passos

MANHATTAN TRANSFER by John Dos Passos. Harper. $2.

Reviewed by Sinclair Lewis

I didn't want to review the book; I was off for a vacation in Bermuda. Now that I've read it, still less do I want to because I am afraid that Mr. Dos Passos's "Manhattan Transfer" may veritably be a great book. And I have come to hate all the superlatives of book-boosting.

The professional executioners, like Mr. Canby, Mr. Sherman, Mr. Mencken—it is their official duty to jerk all the aesthetic criminals off into eternity. But we occasional guardians of spiritual peace, we are typical militiamen, we have to quell literary strikes and arrest chronic offenders, we like only to parade with roses on our muskets, cheered by the flappers along the way. Yet violent strike duty is really less risky than being benevolent.

Nevertheless, I am going to take the risk.

I wonder whether it may not be true that "Manhattan Transfer" is a novel of the very first importance; a book which the idle reader can devour yet which the literary analyst must take as possibly inaugurating, at long last, the vast and blazing dawn we have awaited. It may be the foundation of a whole new school of novel-writing. Dos Passos may be, more than Dreiser, Cather, Hergesheimer, Cabell, or Anderson, the father of humanized and living fiction . . . not merely for America but for the world!

Just to rub it in, I regard "Manhattan Transfer" as more important in every way than anything by Gertrude Stein or Marcel Proust or even the great white boar, Mr. Joyce's "Ulysses." For Mr. Dos Passos can use, and deftly does use, all their experimental psychology and style, all their revolt against the molds of classic fiction. But the difference! Dos Passos is interesting! Their novels are treatises on harmony, very scholarly, and confoundedly dull; "Manhattan Transfer" is the moving symphony itself.

True, no doubt, that without Joyce et Cie., Dreiser and Gesellschaft, Dos Passos might never have been able to devise this channel for the river of living life. Perhaps without a Belasco, even a Charley Hoyt, O'Neill might never have written as he does. But there is no "perhaps" in the question as to whether one prefers "Desire Under the Elms" to the glib falsities of "The Girl of the Golden West." And for one reader there is no question as to whether he prefers the breathless reality of "Manhattan Transfer" to the laboratory-reports of "Ulysses."

In "Manhattan Transfer," Mr. Dos Passos does, really does, what all of us have frequently proved could not be done; he presents the panorama, the sense, the smell, the sound, the soul, of New York. It is a long book—nearly two hundred thousand words, no doubt—but almost any other novelist would have had to take a million words to convey all the personalities and moods which here are quite completely expressed. The book covers some twenty-five years of the growth and decay of not only the hundred or more characters, but of the whole mass of the city—the other millions of characters whom you feel hauntingly behind the persons named and chronicled.

Mr. Dos Passos manages it by omitting the tedious transitions from which most of us can never escape. He flings the heart of a scene before you, ruthlessly casting away the "And so the months and seasons went by and Gertrudine realized that Augusta did not love her" sort of plodding whereby

The Pioneer

by Edna St. Vincent Millay

Upon this marble bust that is not I
Lay the round, formal wreath that is not fame;
But in the forum of my silenced cry
Root ye the living tree whose sap is flame.
I, that was fierce and valiant, am no more,—
Save as a dream that wanders wide and late,
Save as a wind that rattles the stout door,
Troubling the ashes in the sheltered grate.

The stone will perish: I shall be twice dust.
Only my standard on a taken hill
Can cheat the mildew and the red-brown rust
And make immortal my adventurous will.
Even now the silk is tugging at the staff;
Take up the song,—forget the epitaph.

August 29, 1925

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most journeymen novelists fatigue the soul. It is, indeed, the technique of the movie, in its flashes, its cut-backs, its speed.

Large numbers of persons are going to say that it is the technique of the movie. But it differs from the movie in two somewhat important details. It does not deal only with the outsides of human beings; and Dos Passos does not use the technique to acquire a jazz effect, but because, when he has given the complete inwardness of a situation, he will not, to make a tale easy to "drool out," go on with the unessentials. . . .

But the thing that really distinguishes Dos Passos is not the mechanics of technique. It is his passion for the beauty and stir of life—of people, of rivers and little hills and tall towers by dawn and furnace-kindled dusk. . . .

December 5, 1925

The Saturday Review in an Age of Experiment

The ten years since the *Saturday Review* was founded have approximated the era of the so-called "lost generation" of American writers. But what an irony of misnaming that the term "lost" should have been applied to the youth of the one great Western country that did not lose its young in the war, but kept its oncoming generation, disillusioned, discontented, yet able to propagate both their own successors and a new literature! And indeed these ten years which the *Review* and the war generation have lived together, have been rich not sterile, creative not decadent, a decade in which it was good for a literary journal to be alive.

1924-1934 saw Dreiser recognized, Sinclair Lewis come to the peak of his achievement, Robert Frost and Willa Cather round into maturity, Elinor Wylie make her distinguished mark. That decade has to its credit "The Green Pastures" and "Of Thee I Sing," the subtle classic ironies of Thornton Wilder and Robert Nathan, "John Brown's Body," the beginnings of a fiction of the proletariat, and the groundwork of a Marxian critique of American literature. It witnessed the end of prudishness, Eliot and the intellectualists, the creation of *The New Yorker*, our first adequate magazine of satiric humor, the founding of *Fortune*, which represents the first efficient use of the methods of scholarship in journalism, a new literature of economics and a new literature of psychology. It saw the revival of biography for popular reading, and history, with science behind it, made again into an art. The American generation that became of age in these fertile years may have been confused but was certainly not lost.

Still more significant in this decade have been the new forces released and stirring. It has been a period of equinoctial, the intellectual climate of which has changed from storm to storm; indeed its marked characteristics have been a sense of change in the air, a wide restlessness, and a reawakening of spiritual energy long drugged by great expectations of profits and an overweening confidence in American materialism.

The writer responsible for most of the weekly editorials in the *Review* for these ten years, looking back over his contributions, feels like a recording barometer suddenly become conscious of the surprising dips and rises its pen has marked. With surprise, but not with shame, he notes false starts, mistaken interpretations, tentative prophecies not realized. The infallible factotums of literary criticism in earlier days have one by one been exposed by a more scientific scholarship. Their omniscience has been proved hollow, their dogmatic interpretations of their own times, which for a while deceived history, have too many of them been exploded. It is better to have been consistent in reaching after elusive truth, than to have attained, as many of them did, a magnificent consistency of error. Nevertheless this *Review*'s ten years of judgment exercised by editors and contributors working together has not been without its own consistency. It will be clear to the reader looking backward that our barometer has not failed in sensitivity to important currents in the literary life of these interesting years. We have believed that change is a vital element of literature. We have welcomed change whose roots were nourished in a rich and authentic past. We have been aware that change may be from better to worse as easily as from worse to better, but must be accepted (like the universe), yet need not be approved simply because it is change. . . .

From an editorial by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY, *October 6, 1934*

Doomsday

by ELINOR WYLIE

The end of everything approaches;
I hear it coming
Loud as the wheels of painted coaches
On turnpikes drumming;
Loud as the pomp of plumy hearses,
Or pennoned charges;
Loud as when every oar reverses
Venetian barges;
Loud as the caves of covered bridges
Fulfilled with rumble
Of hooves; and loud as cloudy ridges
When glaciers tumble;
Like creeping thunder this continues
Diffused and distant,
Loud in our ears and in our sinews,
Insane, insistent;
Loud as a lion scorning carrion
Further and further;
Loud as the ultimate loud clarion
Or the first murther.

February 26, 1927

Ernest Hemingway

"In many respects the most exciting of contemporary American writers of fiction," says Conrad Aiken in the New York Herald-Tribune. The New York Times calls his new novel

The Sun Also Rises

"a truly gripping story, told in a lean hard, athletic narrative prose that puts more literary English to shame. It is magnificent writing."

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(Reproduced from *SR*, November 27, 1926)

(Reproduced from *SR*, March 12, 1927)

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GOOD BOOKS

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The Great Depression. *Four years after the disastrous crash on Wall Street, at the height of the country's worst-ever economic downturn, a new President came to Washington promising a new deal for the American people. Even a bookish weekly found itself caught up in the excitement of fresh approaches and radical departures. It wasn't long before the magazine could begin reporting on some important literary by-products of the Roosevelt years.*

Roosevelt

ON OUR WAY by FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT. John Day Co. $2.50.

Reviewed by NORMAN THOMAS

President Roosevelt's new book demonstrates conclusively that we are going somewhere. That it does not show where we are going is, perhaps, to the American temperament, a minor matter. It is something after the waste years that we have a president who has courage, political shrewdness, a liberal point of view, and a willingness to act. Likewise it is something that he is as articulate as this book proves him to be.

What the President has done in the book under review is to collect, generally speaking, in chronological order his more important speeches and messages in the crowded year in which he has guided the affairs of the nation. He has tied together this compilation with running comment. The result is a very handy book of reference but scarcely of illumination. Any attempt to construct Mr. Roosevelt's social philosophy must still rest upon his deeds and upon public documents already available to the country. I have looked and looked in vain for more light than we already have upon those developments inside and outside Mr. Roosevelt's mind which made him destroy the London Conference which once he had professed to love. Whether or not the President believes in a commodity dollar, how far he will go in the direction of inflation, how he expects to get the economy of abundance by vigorously pushing a plan for making the farmer prosperous through artificial scarcity—these and a dozen other questions of like interest remain at least as speculative as they were before "On Our Way" appeared.

In his Foreword the President does tell us what everybody, except possibly Dr. Wirt, ought to have known: namely, that his new policy is neither fascism nor communism. I can vouch for the fact that it isn't socialism although for some reason the President does not use that word. He himself still uses rhetorical and ethical terms to describe what he is doing. The New Deal, he assures us, "expresses a satisfactory combination of the Square Deal and the New Freedom." He is very fond of elaborating the idea of good neighbors and what they owe each other. There is much to be said for this sort of writing in terms of political leadership at the present moment in American affairs. It is not enlightening in terms of political or economic philosophy.

When the President gets down from rhetorical and ethical generalities he makes it evident that he believes in planning of some sort; that he regards the inauguration of N.R.A. as a new and significant date in history, and that he has no intention of taking "recovery" too literally. He is genuinely out for a program of reconstruction. . . .

April 14, 1934

*The People, Yes**

by CARL SANDBURG

Lincoln?
He was a mystery in smoke and flags
saying yes to the smoke, yes to the flags,
yes to the paradoxes of democracy,
yes to the hopes of government
of the people by the people for the people,
no to debauchery of the public mind,
no to personal malice nursed and fed,
yes to the Constitution when a help,
no to the Constitution when a hindrance,
yes to man as a struggler amid illusions,
each man fated to answer for himself:
Which of the faiths and illusions of mankind
must I choose for my own sustaining light
to bring me beyond the present wilderness?

"If we could first know where we are,
and whither we are tending,
we could better judge
what to do, and how to do it."

*An excerpt

July 18, 1936

Behind the New Deal

. . . In previous panics "natural" law took its course. The unemployed and poverty-stricken had to shift for themselves, with meagre grants from Lord and Lady Bountiful—and from neighboring poor not yet in the abyss. In this tragic hour, however, no one is to starve. President Hoover announced the new phraseology and hoped that private charity might do the job. Charity tried, but the task was too large. Thereupon President Roosevelt began federal aid on a monumental scale. Before many months had passed, seventeen or eighteen million Americans were receiving government grants, and the number does not seem to be diminishing. Certainly it may be said with assurance that the Administrator, Harry L. Hopkins, has taken a realistic view of the appalling situation, has cast off all trivial clichés about the poor, and has acted with skill and promptness. With much justification, Mr. Hopkins may be called the most enlightened and realistic statesman in the whole administration at Washington, not excluding the President himself. However that may be, millions are being kept out of starvation by government intervention with "the natural course of things."

This relief practice based on the slogan that nobody shall starve is generally accepted, despite differences over methods. And it thrusts something new and portentous into the application of the idea that American society is a congeries of interests. Either the millions are to be kept from starving by excrescent institutions or they are to be absorbed into the congeries of interests by some radical adjustments not yet made or in sight. Bread and circuses are easier to manage for a time. Drastic readjustments in the productive system call for titanic energy and courage; they will be resisted at every step. The risks are great. No statesman likes to assume them as long as any other way seems open. Will coming history so narrow the choice as to make the decision appear inexorable? Past history cannot answer that question.

From an article by CHARLES A. BEARD, *December 22, 1934*

F.D.R.

. . . The first time we saw him was in October 1937, at a press conference in the White House. The room was tightly packed with newsmen, and we prowled around the edge of the crowd, trying to get a full view of the man behind the desk. The President had just come back from Chicago, fresh from his now-historic "quarantine-of-aggressors" speech.

The air was tense; not since the last war had a president been so outspoken in criticizing nations with which we maintained diplomatic relations. . . . Correspondents pressed close to the desk and kept up a rapid fire of questions.

Finally, at the left side of the room, we were able to find a vantage point which gave us a full, clear view of the President. We shall never forget F.D.R. as we saw him then. He was tanned, robust, electric with life. We remember thinking that we had never seen a healthier-looking human being. We remember thinking, too, that we had never seen a more magnificent head. His face was alert, strong, compassionate. He had an eager, expectant look that every now and then would dissolve into a smile or laugh that would win back a smile or laugh from every person in the room.

The White House press conference was

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the greatest show in Washington and everyone knew it, including the President. Many newshawks would come heavily armed with concealed bear traps which were carefully baited with seemingly innocent questions. But they were up against the most agile bear you ever saw. It was wonderful to see the way he would jump in, snatch the bait, and jump out again, swinging the trap around so neatly that the man who baited it would frequently find himself inside. It was a game that everyone enjoyed playing, most of all the President. You could tell, too, that these seasoned old war horses of the Washington press corps loved and respected Mr. Big, even though many of them were constantly prodded by the front office to find some way of putting him on the spot. They loved and respected him because he looked, acted, and spoke the part. They would say that you could see him for the first time, and without knowing anything about him, say to yourself, "That man looks as the President of the United States must look."

There was also the look of greatness. It was inevitable. Anyone who could come back out of retirement, after having been afflicted with a dreadful disease that shrank his limbs and made it impossible for him to walk unaided, would be great for that reason alone. You could see his braces where they entered his shoes, huge pieces of steel that seemed to reach inside you as well. It did things to you because 130 million people were leaning on this man and the weight, if anything, was making him stronger and bigger. . . . *From an editorial by* N.C., *April 21, 1945*

The First WPA Guide

The state and local guide books which the Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration has been preparing are the largest-scale experiment in literary coöperation ever made in the United States. Such an experiment raises important critical and social questions, some of which will be discussed here at a later date, but there is no question about the importance of the guides themselves. The lack of good American guides has been a serious defect in our culture; there could have been no more valuable undertaking for the Writers' Project, and all of us have a direct interest in its success. The publication of the first state project, "Idaho: A Guide in Word and Picture," is therefore momentous, since inevitably the first will be judged as typical of the whole enterprise. In the main this first volume succeeds overwhelmingly, far better than we had any right to ask or reason to expect. Nevertheless because it is the first, certain objections, trifling by themselves, must be recorded in the hope that they may be taken into account as succeeding volumes are prepared for the press.

The Idaho project has been under the direction of Mr. Vardis Fisher, who has headed a staff of eighteen persons, including file clerks and stenographers. It is a small staff but Idaho, though it presents obvious difficulties as one of the largest and most diversified states, calls for no such division of labor as a state of longer history and denser population. Since all state guides must be published under the sponsorship of a public agency, this one was copyrighted by the Secretary of State of Idaho and manufactured under contract by the Caxton Printers. The library edition which is at hand sells for three dollars and is a handsome, fully illustrated royal octavo of 431 pages. A tourist edition to sell at half the price of this one will be issued before summer.

The book is about evenly divided between detailed "tours" and generalized descriptive and analytical information. So far as one can tell at this distance the tours are handled irreproachably. They are clear and specific, compactly written, packed with necessary information, and arranged to be of immediate service to the person who consults them. They have been well edited and only an occasional burst of adjectival ecstasy has come through the screen. Sometimes a sidetrip gets out of hand and leaves the reader separated from the map and forced to do some back-trailing before he can get his bearings. But there is no way of preventing such gaps except by making the book twice as long; within the limits of the possible, the staff has done wonders. . . . Whatever the difficulties caused by the extemporized and necessarily haphazard method of producing the guide, working with an untrained personnel, without precedent and handicapped by constantly changing regulations, the final result is an almost unalloyed triumph. . . .

From an editorial by BERNARD DEVOTO, *February 27, 1938*

Steinbeck

THE GRAPES OF WRATH by JOHN STEINBECK. The Viking Press. $2.75.

Reviewed by GEORGE STEVENS

. . . Since it became known that Steinbeck had a new novel for spring publication, and that it was by far his longest and most ambitious production to date, it is safe to say (for whatever it may mean) that no other book on the current lists has been so eagerly looked forward to by the reviewers. "The Grapes of Wrath" is worth it, worth all the talk, all the anticipation, all the enthusiasm. Here is the epitome of everything Steinbeck has so far given us. It has the humor and earthiness of "Tortilla Flat," the social consciousness of "In Dubious Battle," the passionate concern for the homeless and uprooted which made "Of Mice and Men" memorable. These elements are fused to produce the unique quality of "The Grapes of Wrath." That quality is an understanding of courage—courage seen with humor and bitterness and without a trace of sentimentality; courage that exists as the last affirmation of human dignity. To convey that understanding with passionate conviction, in human terms and also in terms of mature intelligence, is a very considerable thing for a novel to do. That is what "The Grapes of Wrath" does. It is by no means perfect, but possibly its faults are a measure of its worth, in that it triumphantly lives them down. . . .

April 15, 1939

C. W. Anderson
February 6, 1937

"Wasn't it cute of her to read it all the way through before exchanging it for a Shirley Temple doll?"

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War. *The long-predicted war in Europe finally erupted, and soon Hitler's armies had overrun most of the Continent. Would we—could we—stay out? Some observers, like young John F. Kennedy, pondered uneasily the effects of Britain's unpreparedness. As the issue of December 13, 1941, went to press, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. Global war had come. A flash at Hiroshima ended it in 1945—and left mankind with an awesome responsibility.*

Speech to the Scholars

by ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

O scholars schooled upon the books;
O skillful readers of the page:
Rise from your labor now! Enlist
For warfare in this fighting age!

No longer may your learning wear
The neutral truth's dispassionate peace:
There are none neutral in this war:
There are but friends: and enemies.

The warfare of the years before
Was fought beyond you in the field:
The earth it trampled was not yours:
Its losses were not yours to yield.

It never entered at your town
Or if it came came but to kill:
Not to make guns of monuments:
Not to dig trenches in your hill.

It was your bodies not your books
The generals in those battles used:
It was your bodies that were left
Corrupt distorted and abused.

It was your bodies not your minds:
Not learning: not the sacred text
Each man inherits from the last:
Each leaves behind him to the next:

Not learning that succeeding times
Leave in the leather on the shelves—
All they have counted of the stars:
All they have measured of themselves.

Not books: not letters where the past
Speaks to us truly and can tell:
The one great charter which to change
Changes the destiny as well.

Even the Vandals with their knives
Made wreck: not lies: of what they found.
Even the Tartars where they burned
Burned honest ashes on the ground.

The springs were poisoned: not the hearts:
The tongues lied but the truth was spoken:
There were no barbarous tribes that choked
The books up when the wells were broken.

You owed no service in those wars:
You had no duty but survive—
But live and while you lived rehearse
The truth and keep its trust alive.

You could be neutral then!—But now—
Now that the tyrants take your town:
Now that the flank of hope is turned
By marching through your fields and down:

Now that the mounted men have used
Your college cloisters for surprise
And struck where we could least defend
Clothed in your color for disguise:

Now that your bridges to the past
Are broad to let the conqueror come:
Now that your manuscripts are stretched
To make the drumhead to his drum:

Now that your learning is abused:
Now that the fighting's at your door:—
Now are you peaceful in your house?
Now are you neutral in this war?

There is no quarter of your ground
Has not been poisoned for our harm:
You have no knowledge but is used
Against us as a killing arm.

The bought historian rebuilds
The past to make the present true
And robs the dead man of his deeds
To heap the living with his due:

The churchman with the sign of God
Sealed on his conscience still will lie
To justify the tyrant's guns
And slander children as they die:

The word: the very word: the word
Left by our fathers in your trust:
The word is rotten with this war:
The word is filthy with this rust.

I say the guns are in your house:
I say there is no room for flight:
Arise O scholars from your peace!
Arise! Enlist! Take arms and fight!

June 12, 1937

Kennedy

WHY ENGLAND SLEPT by JOHN F. KENNEDY. Wilfred Funk. $2.

Reviewed by JAMES FREDERICK GREEN

Human beings, individually or collectively, rarely seem able to learn from the experience of others. We Americans, in commencing a vast armament program, have before us the experience of the French and British, who likewise set out some years ago to prepare for an impending emergency. If we fail to profit from their disastrous mistakes, it will not be for want of autopsies and inquests. Outstanding among such investigations is this first-rate study of Britain's unpreparedness by John F. Kennedy, son of our Ambassador in London. Mr. Kennedy, who took leave of absence from his studies at Harvard last year to travel and study in Europe, completed this book before his graduation two months ago. As an analysis of British policy and as a contribution to the American problem, the volume would do credit to a man of twice Mr. Kennedy's years. . . .

Mr. Kennedy is scrupulously objective, and avoids making any one man, group, or class responsible for Britain's plight. Unlike too many American journalists, he does not hesitate to apportion part of the blame to the Labor party. He perhaps lets the Chamberlain cabinet off too easily, particularly with regard to its complacency and inefficiency after the outbreak of war. In general, Mr. Kennedy tends to spare the upper classes, whose appalling limitations were revealed in Sir Nevile Henderson's memoirs, and whose hatred of the Soviet Union blinded them to the Nazi menace and weakened British foreign policy. One would also like to know why the British government slept so soundly through the Manchurian and Ethiopian crises, as well as the Spanish civil war. These are some of the details needed to complete the picture of England's long siesta. Despite their absence, this reviewer concurs with Mr. Henry R. Luce, who writes as follows in his laudatory foreword: "I hope 1,000,000 Americans will read this book."

September 7, 1940

Shirer

BERLIN DIARY by WILLIAM L. SHIRER. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

Reviewed by WILLIAM L. WHITE

This is the best book on Germany in many years, and it will be as many more before a better one can be written. Shirer, who has lived in Germany from 1934 until this winter, knows the Nazis better than any other American, and is gifted with an eye for significant detail.

The first half of the book, a highly readable account of the prelude to catastrophe, has in part been covered by other observers, but never better than here. But the last three

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hundred pages bring to America completely fresh material. It is an account of the active phase of the war from behind the German lines and in many cases through Nazi eyes. It is packed with keen observation on new facts. I have yet to find anyone who picked the book up who was able to put it down unfinished. . . .

Almost as important as Shirer's clearly marshalled facts is the conclusion, which, at the end, emerges more and more clearly as a part of these facts. This is that National Socialism is the deadly enemy of our free, democratic way of life; it cannot possibly come to rest until it has conquered and dominates the world, and if it fails in this it will perish. Through a thousand little facts presented without bias in this gripping narrative the reader comes to realize that war between America and Hitler is inevitable, and that our only choice is whether to declare it while we have a chance to win it, or wait until Hitler declares it after that chance is gone.

"Berlin Diary" is the most important non-fiction book of the season; probably of the year.

June 28, 1941

WAR

The *Saturday Review* goes to press at the moment when the United States has taken up the war challenge of Japan. A magazine devoted to the encouragement and interpretation of American literature has its duties and responsibilities, too, in the months or years to come of the struggle against the forces that are trying to extinguish the meaning of America from the world. We will fight against every symptom and manifestation of fascist thought, and try, as best we can, to do the job of chronicling and evaluating the development of an intrinsically American culture, with emphasis upon our literature—the literature born not only out of the events and issues of the day, but out of the lasting purposes and goals of a free people.

From an editorial, December 13, 1941

Seldes

PROCLAIM LIBERTY by GILBERT SELDES. The Greystone Press. $2.

Reviewed by JAMES B. RESTON

The politicians and military experts may rightly be concerned with Second Fronts, or, like Harry Hopkins, with Third Fronts and Fourth Fronts. But there is still a lot of work to be done on the First Front, which is here at home in the minds and hearts of our own people.

The strength to win the war and the will to win it lie on this front. There is no question about that. But there are still deep divisions about why we got into the war and how we are to win it and for what purpose, and it is to these questions that Gilbert Seldes directs his attention in a thoughtful, well-written, and wise little book.

For the people who are planning our second, third, and fourth fronts, for the people who are still trying to fit the war into their normal lives with as little inconvenience as possible, and for the people who are haranguing each other from the extreme right and left, Mr. Seldes has this suggestion: read the history of your own country, try again to understand the American Dream, and you will understand why we are fighting, how we are to win, and where we are going.

As Mr. Seldes sees it, the war is basically another round in the old battle between democracy and feudalism, between the people who recognize the necessity and importance of constant change and progress, and those who want to create a fixed, unchangeable form of society. "Democracy destroyed feudalism," he says, "and feudalism, returning in a new form as fascism, must destroy democracy or go down in the attempt. The New Order and the New World cannot exist side by side because they are both expanding forces." That is basically why we are fighting.

In war, as in chess, Mr. Seldes observes, the winner is the one who can break out of the strategy imposed by his opponent. So far we have been following along behind Hitler, improvising our copies of his ideas, and getting them into action just about the time he brings out something new. We do not have to fight Hitler in his way; we must fight him in our own way. . . .

July 4, 1942

Christmas, 1940

by OGDEN NASH

How many years to Bethlehem?
Near a hundred score.
Can I get there by candle light?
Not this war.

The friendly, holy candle light
Is bale fire now to death,
Its perilous glimmer long blown out
By sirens' breath.

Through skies the Wise Men humbly scanned
Three keener hunters flit—
Heinkel and Dornier seek the gleam,
With Messerschmidt.

No manger now, no cattle shed,
Too lowly to be found.
Take up the babe and hurry him
Deep underground.

But cave nor grave is deep enough
To shield young flesh and bone.
Hurry him down, and o'er his head
Roll the great stone.

What need of law to still the bells,
For how should bells be merry?
The day the child in joy was born,
The child we bury.

Gentlemen of the High Command,
Who crucify the slums,
There was an earlier Golgotha.
The third day comes.

December 28, 1940

Dilkes
March 22, 1941

"I've just been drafted. What have you got on blowing bugles by ear?"

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Battle Books. *By the 1950s, whatever was left of the magazine's pre-war ivory tower had been effectively demolished. Increasing attention was now given to books that made news and changed minds—whether they concerned themselves with civil rights, union corruption, the Cold War, pollution, or women's liberation. Their influential, trend-setting authors became household names to a generation beset by prickly problems and complex choices.*

King

STRIDE TOWARD FREEDOM by MARTIN LUTHER KING. Harper. $2.95.

Reviewed by LILLIAN SMITH

This is the most interesting book that has come out of the current racial situation in the South: important as documentary, full of accurate facts that historians will value; exciting as one dramatic scene after another unfolds; wise and compassionate in its point of view.

On one level it is an account of how 50,000 Negroes caught in an unbearable situation met and transcended their ordeal. Here they were: torn by schisms within their own group, tormented by small jealousies and ambitions, smothered by external pressures from the white group and internal pressures of fear, suspicion, self-depreciation. Then suddenly something happens—and they are lifted up by a new vision, a stern purpose, and unified not alone by their brave acts but by the spirit of nonviolence and love that illumined those acts. This story is told by a man who not only experienced it at the center of things but who is aware of its complex meanings.

But there is another story here, and quite as important. It is the modest and candid confession of a man with no ambition to become a leader who was forced into the role by circumstances and need and who, in a profound sense, was reborn by his commitment. . . .

I found it a deeply moving book. It is full of memorable words, such as those of the old woman walking to work every day who replied to an inquirer about her health, "Honey, my feets is tired but my soul is rested."

But beneath the pathos, the humor, the shocking scenes of brutality and the fine moments when hate slowly turned to compassion there is a solid rock of values. The Negro leaders in Montgomery were working not for racial integration alone but for a moral transformation of the community's life. And because their purpose was big, their philosophy firm, because the means they used were without hate, because all of it together cut through level after level of human experience, the account of a bus boycott in Montgomery will, I think, become a classic story—as has Gandhi's salt march—of man demanding justice and discovering that justice first begins in his own heart.

September 20, 1958

Kennedy

THE ENEMY WITHIN by ROBERT F. KENNEDY. Harper. $3.95.

Reviewed by VICTOR RIESEL

His enemies called him "Bobby," as though being young were as heinous a crime as those with which they etched their terror on the people of the land. Soon his enemies called him other names, as lewd as their philosophy that the public be damned and that every dues-payer is a sucker to be looted in turn. This "Bobby," Robert F. Kennedy, chief counsel to the Senate Select Committee on Improper Activities in the Labor or Management Field, couldn't be reached, couldn't be tempted, couldn't be stopped in his drive to rip open at the seams an ugly "Thing."

That "Thing," it seems to me, was and is the American prototype of old-fashioned Fascism—the mélange of muscle, terror, and fire by night; the breakdown and corruption of law and order; the smirking disdain for civil liberties and due process; the merging of crooked elements that seized some unions, and then tying them to those who were corrupt inside management.

There are those of us who took seriously, therefore, the statement of a shocked committee chairman, Senator John McClellan, that this nation was threatened by a gangster economy. This is the sordid story Robert Kennedy tells swiftly, in journalese style. . . .

The book—a skilful weaving of the more dramatic moments of the thirty-month saga of his committee, its probes, and the dangers of seeking out the enemy within—if you'll permit me the phrase—is mainly about James Riddle Hoffa. Kennedy did what came naturally. Jimmy Hoffa is most of the challenge. . . .

February 27, 1960

Packard

THE WASTE MAKERS by VANCE PACKARD. Longmans. $4.50.

Reviewed by NICHOLAS SAMSTAG

. . . "The Waste Makers" is the third of Mr. Packard's homilies, the other two being "The Hidden Persuaders" and "The Status Seekers." Like its predecessors it will, I predict, head straight for the best-seller list, where it will stay for a long, long time. It is dedicated "To My Mother and Father who have never confused the possession of goods with the good life." The thought springs to mind that one must possess quite a few goods before one can avoid the confusion to which the author refers, but this leads to speculations which we have no time to develop here.

Vance Packard begins by rubbing our noses in the truly horrifying wastefulness of our economic system; then he tells us in clear detail how we are lured into buying things that he doesn't think we need or really want; he depicts with mournful gusto what overconsumption is doing to our resources and to our characters, and, finally, he outlines several temptingly logical correctives in which words like "prudence" and "excellence" and phrases like "the eternal balance" and "an enduring style of life" figure importantly.

Like the others in the trilogy, "The Waste Makers" is eminently worth reading and highly quotable, not only in what the author says but in what he passes on to us from his sources. For instance, he quotes Fairfield Osborn's amazing statement that "We Americans have used more of the world's resources in the last forty years than all the people of the world had used in the 4,000 years of recorded history up to 1914." He cited a survey by insurance companies that revealed: "The average American family is three months from bankruptcy." He quotes a contributor to the Wall Street Journal who says, "Maximum sales volume demands the cheapest construction for the briefest interval that the buying public will tolerate." And he sprinkles his book with hundreds of goodies like, "In the gambling center of Las Vegas some of the toilet booths contain slot machines." Whatever else you skip, don't miss Charles A. Lindbergh's eloquent expression of his disillusionment with scientific materialism. . . .

November 5, 1960

Kissinger

THE NECESSITY FOR CHOICE by HENRY KISSINGER. Harper. $6.

Reviewed by FRANK ALTSCHUL

In the recent campaign the Republican Presidential candidate went out of his way to reassure the American public with the frequently reiterated statement that we have never been stronger. To demolish this and other widely cultivated illusions is the purpose of Henry A. Kissinger's book "The Necessity for Choice." A careful reading of his closely reasoned analysis can hardly fail to carry the conviction that he has been frighteningly successful.

However, the demolishing of illusions is only one of the tasks that the author has set himself. Having exposed some of our more glaring weaknesses which have so long been concealed behind a barrage of highly technical verbiage, he addresses himself to the overriding problem, *i.e.*, how are we to recover lost ground? As the title of his book

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indicates, he believes that while "our margin of survival has narrowed dangerously . . . we still do have a margin. The possibility of choice remains . . . we can still shape our future."

It is clear that Dr. Kissinger, like many other military experts, holds the conviction that our defense policy has far too long been based upon the concept of deterrence. There was some justification for this when we held the atomic monopoly. But after the Soviet Union had broken our monopoly, and had developed a family of intercontinental ballistic missiles capable of delivering atomic or thermonuclear warheads over great distances, this justification came to an end. The credibility of the deterrent and in fact its very invulnerability were both thrown into serious question. To re-establish this credibility and to assure a maximum degree of invulnerability have become matters of the greatest urgency. . . .

This is an eloquent and thought-provoking book. It is a call to action on a wide front. It is particularly timely, appearing just as the reins of government are to be handed over to a new Administration. If it does not reflect, it can hardly fail to influence the attitude of President Kennedy in regard to the most critical problem with which he will have to deal.

January 14, 1961

Carson

SILENT SPRING by RACHEL CARSON. Houghton, Mifflin. $5.

Reviewed by LOREN EISELEY

. . . It is a devastating, heavily documented, relentless attack upon human carelessness, greed, and irresponsibility—an irresponsibility that has let loose upon man and the countryside a flood of dangerous chemicals in a situation which, as Miss Carson states, is without parallel in medical history. "No one," she adds, "yet knows what the ultimate consequences may be."

"Silent Spring" is her account of those floods of insecticides and well-intentioned protective devices which have indiscriminately slaughtered our wildlife of both forest and stream. Such ill-considered activities break the necessary food chains of nature and destroy the livelihood of creatures not even directly affected by the pesticides. We have no assurance that we are not introducing into nature heavy concentrates of non-natural substances whose effects are potentially as dangerous as those that came to light in the dramatic medical episode that shocked the public in recent weeks. I refer, of course, to the foetal monsters produced by the sleep drug Thalidomide. Imperfect though the present legal controls in the field of direct medical experiment may be, they are less inadequate than in agricultural chemistry, where aerial spraying is cascading a rain of poison over field and farmland. . . .

In case after case, Miss Carson succeeds in documenting her thesis with complete adequacy. It is not pleasant to learn of the casual spraying of the landscape with chemicals capable of mutagenic effects and regarded by some authorities as representing as great a menace as high levels of radiation. Nor is it reassuring to read that the hydrocarbons have an affinity for mammalian germ cells. At present there is no law on the statute books that requires manufacturers to demonstrate the genetic effects, as distinguished from the toxicity, of their concoctions. Nor is there any way of controlling what the average uninformed farmer may do with his insecticides. An equally ill-educated and impatient public wants its weeds, gnats, and mosquitoes eliminated in one fell blow. It is not sophisticated enough to trouble over the looming demise of our beautiful national bird, the bald eagle, nor to connect the return of many supposedly eliminated pests with the fact that the newer generation may be able to flourish in a sack of DDT and thus be twice as formidable. . . .

September 29, 1962

"Good grief! I've found a substitute for oil!"

Ed Fisher
January 4, 1958

Friedan

THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE by BETTY FRIEDAN. Norton. $5.95.

Reviewed by LILLIAN SMITH

. . . Nora is back in the doll's house. It is now an air-conditioned, split-level abode with her own car in the garage, but a doll's house nevertheless. For a short while in the early decades of this century she was given a brief glimpse of a world where she might function as a full human being, where her intelligence and talent might be valued. Now, somehow, here she is pushed back to her old biological level as she was in the Ibsen drama. The only change (which might be interpreted as a bribe) is that today Nora, the little dear, can enjoy sex: *that* part of her nature has been officially defrosted. But alas, poor Nora! As she defrosts, her man's amatory functions seem to be slipping into a hard chill. . . .

I did not find one dull chapter in the book; but the one—nicely documented—that describes the new half-Lolita—half-broodmare image of woman as built up by the image-makers on Madison Avenue and in editorial councils of big-circulation magazines is the weirdest. Weird because it makes horrible sense. The motivation behind the image-making, Mrs. Friedan suggests, is to find ways to sell more things so advertisers will spend more and more millions and industries will produce more and more useless gadgets nobody wants. The idea is this: educate the girls; wake up their minds; then convince them they should go back to the doll's house because sex is fun now and having babies is a charming "role" to play. Once there, they are loaded with housework (the mere handling of gadgets is exhausting—not to mention the babies); their minds empty out; their souls empty, too. But they've been convinced they must not reveal their brains by reading a book or by thinking; so they look at the pretty ads and buy, buy, buy, piling up things to fill a spiritual hollowness only the growth of their inner selves can ever fill.

February 23, 1963

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Best-Sellers. *The more things change, the more they remain the same. Hardly a year has passed in the last half-century when there wasn't a self-help book of some kind on the list of non-fiction best-sellers. But though Dale Carnegie is still familiar, who now remembers the Abbé Dimnet's* Art of Thinking *(No. 1 in 1929)? Another constant in the annals of best-sellerdom is the high incidence of women novelists who made it to the top of the lists.*

Dimnet

THE ART OF THINKING by ERNEST DIMNET. Simon & Schuster. $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN DEWEY

Some books lend themselves to reviewing; they seem made for that purpose even more than to read. Abbé Dimnet's little book is not one of these. He gives ferments rather than recipes; he has practiced the art of thinking until its product is itself a work of art. Before a work of art one is likely to be dumb or to indulge only in ejaculations; and when asked why one likes it, to reply "Go and see for yourself." That is the way I feel about this genial and witty book. I would say to the reader "Taste it, try it for yourself. Keep it close at hand, read a page or two, a paragraph, opening at random. Browse about in it; read it consecutively. Keep it on a bedside table and read it to compose your mind at night and to arouse it in the morning." And in answer to the question "Why?" the best reply I can make is still "Try it and see." For the book is compact with the wisdom gathered in years of observation of himself and of others.

The reader finds in it suggestions of ways by which to estimate the quality of his own thinking. The suggestions probe deep, and unless one is willing to face himself he would do better to confine himself to the easier task of checking the list of qualities in some efficiency chart. The reader finds also an account of the causes that have produced a decline in native turn for genuine thought—for all normal children up to ten years of age or so can think, because they see for themselves. And after the diagnosis of disease, there are remedies provided, "Helps to Thinking." One may at first be disappointed in finding the secret of the entire art put in a sentence: "The Art of Thinking is the art of being oneself." But if one comes back to the book often enough, and if after tasting frequently one absorbs and digests, then one will, I am confident, find in his interpretation of the sentence a revelation of himself that will lead him, if he will only permit it, to serener intellectual heights than he has known.

There are at least a dozen suggestions offered, any one of which, if taken, will lead to improvements of mental habitudes. Among them are "conjuring up a suitable background"; reading only what gives the greatest pleasure; going repeatedly over what one already knows, and so on. But the point that I think I cherish most highly is that Abbé Dimnet has had the courage to insist on the connection between capacity of thinking and the qualities that are usually called moral. He does not preach, but no one can read the book in the spirit in which he recommends that every book should be read, and not realize that sluggishness, parasitical dependence upon others, slackness of taste, and similar defects of character cause more deficiencies of mind than do lacks that are distinctly intellectual in origin. If there are those fortunate enough not to need any of the counsels that the author gives, I still urge them to read the book if only to make the acquaintance of a deeply wise personality.

December 1, 1928

Two Tramps in Mud-Time

by ROBERT FROST

Out of the mud two strangers came
And caught me splitting wood in the yard.
And one of them put me off my aim
By hailing cheerily "Hit them hard!"
I knew pretty well why he dropped behind
And let the other go on a way.
I knew pretty well what he had in mind:
He wanted to take my job for pay.

Good blocks of beech it was I split,
As large around as the chopping block;
And every piece I squarely hit
Fell splinterless as a cloven rock.
The blows that a life of self-control
Spares to strike for the common good
That day, giving a loose to my soul,
I spent on the unimportant wood.

The sun was warm but the wind was chill.
You know how it is with an April day:
When the sun is out and the wind is still,
You're one month on in the middle of May.
But if you so much as dare to speak
A cloud comes over the sunlit arch,
A wind comes off a frozen peak,
And you're two months back in the middle of March.

A bluebird comes tenderly up to alight
And fronts the wind to unruffle a plume,
His song so pitched as not to excite
A single flower as yet to bloom.
It is snowing a flake and he half knew
Winter was only playing possum.
Except in color he isn't blue.
But he wouldn't advise a thing to blossom.

The water for which we may have to look
In summertime with a witching-wand,
In every wheelrut's now a brook,
In every print of a hoof a pond.
Be glad of water, but don't forget
The lurking frost in the earth beneath
That will steal forth after the sun is set
And show on the water its crystal teeth.

The time when most I loved my task
These two must make me love it more
By coming with what they came to ask.
You'd think I never had felt before
The weight of an ax head poised aloft,
The grip on earth of outspread feet,
The life of muscles rocking soft
And smooth and moist in vernal heat.

Out of the woods two hulking tramps
(From sleeping God knows where last night
But not long since in the lumber camps),
They thought all chopping was theirs of right.
Men of the woods and lumber-jacks,
They judged me by their appropriate tool.
Except as a fellow handled an ax,
They had no way of knowing a fool.

Nothing on either side was said.
They knew they had but to stay their stay
And all their logic would fill my head:
As that I had no right to play
With what was another man's work for gain.
My right might be love but theirs was need.
And where the two exist in twain
Theirs was the better right—agreed.

But yield who will to their separation,
My object in life is to unite
My avocation and my vocation
As my two eyes make one in sight.
Only where love and need are one,
And the work is play for moral stakes,
Is the deed ever really done
For Heaven and the future's sakes.

October 6, 1934

Carnegie

HOW TO WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE by DALE CARNEGIE. Simon & Schuster. $2.

Reviewed by JAMES THURBER

. . . In this book you will find the secret of Jim Farley's success, the turning point in Hall Caine's life, why Andrew Carnegie paid Charles Schwab a million dollars a year, and Adela Rogers St. John's analysis of the Mdivani charm for women. At the end there is a list of nine books on sex life and marriage and ten rules for wives and ten for husbands. Everywhere there are things like this: "The next time we are tempted to give somebody 'hail Columbia' let's pull a five-dollar bill out of our pocket, look at Lincoln's picture on the bill, and ask, 'How would Lincoln handle this problem if he had it?' " And this: "Flattery is

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from the teeth out. Sincere appreciation is from the heart out. No! No! No! I am not suggesting flattery! Far from it. I'm talking about a new way of life. Let me repeat: *I'm talking about a new way of life.*" That new way of life is incorporated in a set of rules, of which these are a few: "Smile," "Remember that a man's name to him is the sweetest and most important sound in the English language," "Make the other person feel important and do it sincerely," "Never tell a man he is wrong," "Get the other person saying 'yes, yes' immediately." One chapter is entitled "How to Make People Like You Instantly," another "A Quick Way to Make Everybody Happy." I think that gives you the idea. . . .

Mr. Carnegie loudly protests that one can be sincere and at the same time versed in the tricks of influencing people. Unfortunately, the disingenuities in his set of rules and in his case histories stand out like ghosts at a banquet. Mr. Carnegie, I gather, is a bit touchy on this point. He relates that, in addressing an audience one night, he told them of how he had once, out of sheer kindliness, said to a post office clerk, "I certainly wish I had your head of hair." One of Mr. Carnegie's listeners, who had apparently come to learn about how to influence people, how to get what you're after, asked, naturally enough, it seems to me, "What did you want to get out of him?" Writes Mr. Carnegie: "What was I trying to get out of him!!! Great God Almighty!!!" Steady on, Mr. Carnegie. Remember "Smile," and some of your other rules, and also one of mine: exclamation points, even three in a row, do not successfully convey depth of sincerity or intensity of feeling.

January 30, 1937

Mitchell

GONE WITH THE WIND by MARGARET MITCHELL. The Macmillan Co. $3.

Reviewed by STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

This is war, and the wreck and rebuilding that follows it, told entirely from the woman's angle. We have had other novels about the Civil War by women, including Mary Johnston's excellent ones and Evelyn Scott's remarkable "The Wave." But I don't know of any other in which the interest is so consistently centered, not upon the armies and the battles, the flags and the famous names, but upon that other world of women who heard the storm, waited it out, succumbed to it or rebuilt after it, according to their natures. It is in the diaries and the memoirs—in Letitia Macdonald and Mrs. Roger A. Pryor and a dozen more. But it has never been put so completely in fiction before. And it is that which gives "Gone With the Wind" its originality and its individual impact.

It is a long book and a copious one, crowded with character and incident, and bound together with one consistent thread, the strong greediness of Scarlett O'Hara, who was bound to get her way, in spite of the hampering ideal of the Perfect Southern Gentlewoman and the ruin that follows men's wars. She didn't, quite, in the end, though she got a great many other things, including money and power—but the tale of her adventures and her struggles makes as readable, full-bodied, and consistent a historical novel as we have had in some time —a novel which, in certain passages, as in the flight from burning Atlanta, rises to genuine heights. Miss Mitchell knows her period, her people, and the red hill country of North Georgia—she knows the clothes and the codes and the little distinctions that make for authenticity. Tara is a working plantation, not a white-porched movie-set—and Atlanta is itself and an individual city, not a fabulous combination of all the first-family features of Richmond, Charleston, and New Orleans. The civilization of the antebellum South was something a little more than a picturesque gesture in gentility—and to a public a little surfeited with wistful reminiscence of the cape-jessamine side of it, Miss Mitchell's rather more realistic treatment should come as a decided relief. . . .

In spite of its length, the book moves swiftly and smoothly—a three-decker with all sails set. Miss Mitchell has lost neither her characters in her background nor her background in her characters, and her full-blooded story is in the best traditions of the historical novel. It is a good novel rather than a great one, by the impalpables that divide good work from great. And there is, to this reviewer, perhaps unjustly, the shadow of another green-eyed girl over Scarlett O'Hara—as Rhett Butler occasionally shows traces both of St. Elmo and Lord Steyne and Melanie's extreme nobility tends to drift into Ameliaishness here and there. Nevertheless, in "Gone With the Wind," Miss Mitchell has written a solid and vividly interesting story of war and reconstruction, realistic in detail and told from an original point of view—and, as the Book-of-the-Month selection for July, it should reach the wide audience it very genuinely deserves.

July 4, 1936

. . . Miss Mitchell uses practically all the time-worn situations and conventions of melodrama, and averages about five "East Lynne" curtains per hundred pages. We wish she had used fewer of them or worked up more combinations of her own. . . . She is an expert storyteller and that counts heavily in her favor, even though the story she chooses to tell is full of hackneyed situations and effects. "Gone With the Wind" is a lively book which will hold anyone's interest over long stretches of prose, and it is full of vivid scenes rendered with dash and verve. But it is basically wish-fulfillment literature. . . . Its sentiments are strong and lively but also commonplace and frequently cheap. Its total effect is a falsification of experience. . . .

From an editorial by BERNARD DEVOTO, *January 8, 1938*

Metalious

PEYTON PLACE by GRACE METALIOUS. Messner. $3.95.

Reviewed by MARY BARRETT

For a long time many American writers have believed that the tight, white houses of New England are too sedate to be true, that the passions must be devilishly compressed within their walls. In an ambitious first novel, Grace Metalious shares this suspicion and does her best to justify it by uncovering horrors not just in one but in any number of families in a small northern New England town.

Very properly, the novel bears the name of the town, for the town is really her central study and Miss Metalious endows it with a kind of wilful power, as if it were another white whale. But what is a town, and if treated as a kind of character what characteristics can it demonstrate except sociological commonplaces? There is no story, and at the end one cannot say what the book is about. For excitement of motive Miss Metalious supplies us with continuous synthetic shocks by means of language and sexual incidents. . . .

October 6, 1956

Nabokov

LOLITA by VLADIMIR NABOKOV.

Once upon a time there was an old publishing adage which went something like this: "If you want to produce a bestseller, publish a novel that will be banned in Boston." But this spring it looks as if the old adage needs some refurbishment. Now, instead of Boston, some bookmen are substituting the name of the city which bears the reputation of being the most lenient in all the world in matters of literary license. The city: Paris. This spring, in fact, after a series of paradoxes which have become internationally known as *L'Affaire Lolita*, American bookshops are selling as often as they can obtain shipments a novel which has actually been banned in Paris—and rapidly selling out of it, too, at $12.50 a copy.

The name of this paradox-bound novel is "Lolita, or the Confession of a White Widowed Male," a novel in two pale green paperback volumes by a Russian-born Cornell professor named Vladimir Nabokov which, oddly enough, was first published in Paris in English rather than French. Its salable subject matter in any language: a middle-aged man's sexual lust for a girl in her early adolescence. . . .

From an article by GEORGE BAKER, *June 22, 1957*

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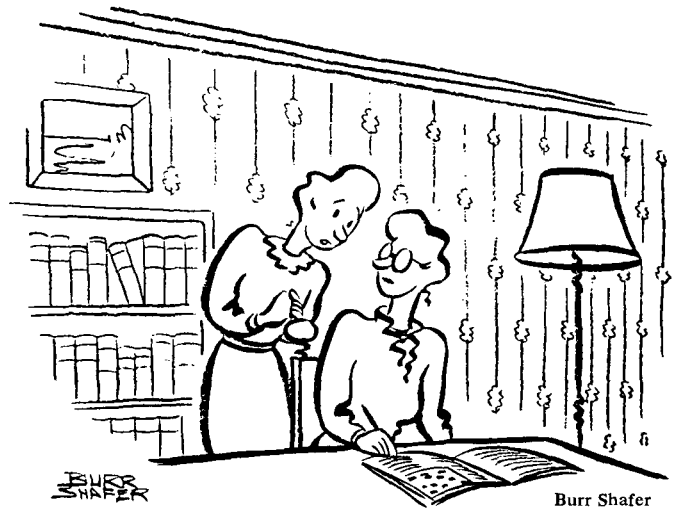
Fun and Games. Saturday Review *has always cultivated the light touch—the columns began with Christopher Morley's "Bowling Green" and the later "Trade Winds" by Bennett Cerf and others, continuing today with those of Goodman Ace, Cleveland Amory, John Ciardi, William Cole, Thomas H. Middleton, and Leo Rosten. It has also cultivated word games, the most durable of which started with Double-Crostics No. 1—reproduced below.*



Burr Shafer
November 7, 1942

"Oh, I don't believe the Saturday Review *would use a word like that in their Double-Crostics."*

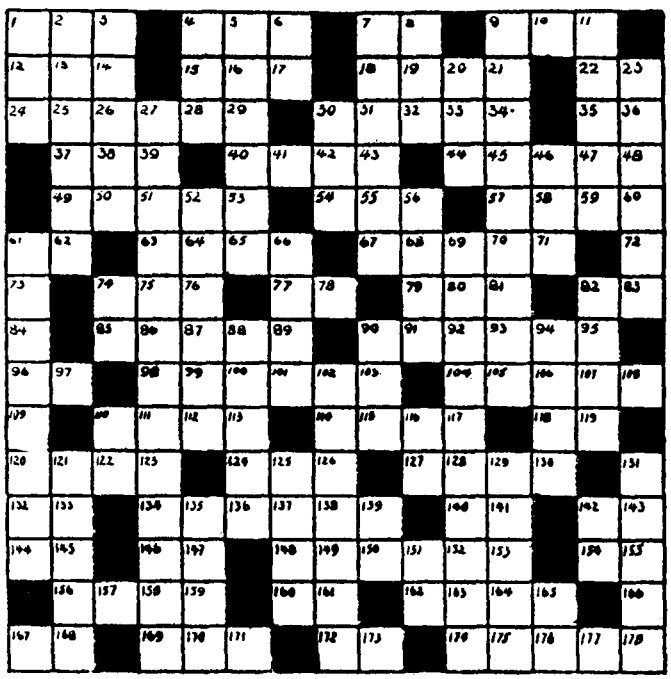
Double-Crostics: Number 1

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered (these numbers appear at the beginning of each definition) and you are thereby able to tell how many letters are in the required word. When you have guessed a word each letter is to be written in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing! The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

Either before (preferably) or after placing the letters in their squares you should write the words you have guessed on the blank lines which appear to the right in the column headed WORDS. The initial letters of this list of words spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken.



NOTICE

This is the first of a series of ingenious literary puzzles invented by Elizabeth S. Kingsley for The Saturday Review. A new puzzle will be published each week, and the answer to the previous puzzle will appear regularly in this space. Let us know if the DIRECTIONS are clear. And after you have solved several of the puzzles we should like to know whether you think them too hard or too easy—our DEFINITIONS will be governed accordingly! Write to THE PUZZLE EDITOR, THE SATURDAY REVIEW, 25 WEST 45TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY.

DEFINITIONS

I. 1-14-23-50-95. A perfume of roses.

II. 145-6-28-90-137. Child's game played with cards and numbers.

III. 97-8-79-146-98-61-75-77-76-32-27-19-133. Light as a feather.

IV. 80-85-60-113-51-58-48. Held in high esteem; worshipped.

V. 81-172-31-84-24-176-65-89. Insubstantial.

VI. 112-45-114-164-149-173-142-38. The business section of a city.

VII. 144-102-2-63. Material for bandages.

VIII. 37-4-66-82-110-116-62. Upholstered backless seat.

IX. 100-106-33-5-122-41-138-69-83-13-162-127. A Russian pianist.

X. 40-59-52-25. A drupe with a single seed.

XI. 135-175-3-73. Movement of the ocean.

XII. 130-43-129-107-111-55-139-47. To alienate.

XIII. 15-121-92-136-101-39. A mighty hunter.

XIV. 167-9-140-46-105. Artless; simple.

XV. 119-54-104-17-153-34. Hebrew God.

XVI. 134-64-128-168-16-30. Flat, dark image.

XVII. 155-125-78-148-143-165-158-56. Prejudiced (compound).

XVIII. 12-96-120-11-7-170-150-21-68-174. Significant, unusual.

XIX. 87-141-171-161-67-20-10-126. Not propitious.

XX. 177-99-152-163-108-115. Member of the tribe of Levi.

XXI. 12-88-28-159-49-71. Doodle dandy.

XXII. 22-71-151-118-131-147-38-94-160-29. Watchword (Bibl.)

XXIII. 109-86-132-124-72-117-123-178. Uttered a harsh sound.

XXIV. 157-44-93-53-156-18-35-163. Forceful.

XXV. 136-154-74-169-70-57. To stop the flow.

WORDS

I. _____

II. _____

III. _____

IV. _____

V. _____

VI. _____

VII. _____

VIII. _____

IX. _____

X. _____

XI. _____

XII. _____

XIII. _____

XIV. _____

XV. _____

XVI. _____

XVII. _____

XVIII. _____

XIX. _____

XX. _____

XXI. _____

XXII. _____

XXIII. _____

XXIV. _____

XXV. _____

March 31, 1934

Solution on page 111.

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Credos. *Henry Seidel Canby,* Saturday Review*'s founding editor, defined the magazine's aims in a long front-page editorial in Vol. I, No. 1. The gist of it was given in the title: timely and timeless. Since then, anniversary issues have provided an occasion for restating* Saturday Review*'s editorial philosophy. In its first 50 years, the magazine has undergone significant changes in format and coverage, but its beliefs and its ideals remain essentially unaltered.*

Timely and Timeless

A literary review without a program is like a modern man without his clothes—healthy, agile, functioning in all his senses, but regarded as less than respectable, even by his friends. Yet what is a program but a reflection of temperament! A sanguine, full-blooded man thinks well of his universe, a melancholy man thinks ill of his, and each makes his program. There is more honest philosophizing in many a casual newspaper column, or blunt plain man's opinion, than in elaborate sets of principles chosen to fit a prevailing mood.

We cannot escape from our moods but we need not capitalize them for the supposed benefit of bored contemporaries. The *Saturday Review* is to have a guiding purpose, that must be drawn not from the temperament of the editorial staff but from things as they are in literature. . . .

From an editorial by Henry Seidel Canby, *August 2, 1924*

A Credo of Reviewing

. . . We believe, it should not need the saying, that the first and absolute prerequisite of literary criticism is honesty. And by honesty we do not mean merely freedom from the influence of author or publisher or advertiser, or freedom from personal grudge or enthusiasm, but that higher integrity which implies an ever-present consciousness of the sanctity of literature, of the obligation of the critic to his subject, his profession, and his public, of the necessity that is upon him for greater knowledge than he is called upon at any particular moment to use, and of the fact that to be a true critic he must wear always a curious, an eager, and an open mind. Back of all sound criticism must lie sound feeling and sound thinking, a reasoned philosophy of life, a disciplined emotional outlook. Or else is criticism nothing more than response to sentiment or mood. Scholarship alone will never make the constructive critic, though without scholarship a great part of criticism loses validity. Imagination, insight, and understanding, though they are indispensable to all good criticism, and can make fair shift without a large background of learning in certain fields of interpretation, never constitute high criticism unless they spring from a knowledge that allows them to range their subject in time as well as in place. It is knowledge wed to imagination that makes the creative critic.

We believe, what is but a further extension of the idea of critical integrity, that reviewing to be trustworthy must be detached, that it cannot be the mouthpiece of a school or an individual inflexibly set upon a theory, though inevitably criticism that is sufficiently distinguished to a degree establishes a norm of judgment. As a corollary, we believe that a journal of literary criticism to carry weight must represent the views of a widely divergent group of contributors, each indisputably an authority in his field, each aware, if not persuaded of, theories in conflict with his own, and each a searcher for the truth and not the partisan of a prepossession.

We believe the cardinal sin of a reviewer to be the exploitation of himself instead of the interpretation of his subject. While we hold that the public is better served in regard to certain types of books by the review that presents or discusses their subject matter in relation to their field as a whole rather than analyzes the volumes in detail, we are certain that there is no place in a just literary journal for the critic who uses it for the mere display of his own erudition, for the advancement of personal peccadilloes, or the waging of personal controversies.

We believe that good reviewing does not mean facile writing, that it means a sense for form, a knowledge of style, clarity of intention and manner, grace that exists not as an end but as a means to that end which is the dissemination of ideas. We believe that good reviewing presupposes apprising the reader of the content of a book, of its aim, the measure of its achievement, and of its value not only in itself but in relation to other work that has preceded it in its field. This is the *sine qua non* of all criticism, but it is not all of criticism. We believe that the higher criticism uses this basis as the springboard to the only critical writing which is prepotent and creative,—that which is an interpretation of letters as a commentary upon life. We believe that reviews of a few lines in length can on occasions be as useful, and as completely do justice to their objectives, as lengthy discussion. But we believe also, that criticism that aspires to be more than news reviewing, frequently deserves and demands space for the elaboration of ideas as well as the statement of specific judgments.

We believe that criticism is an art as well as a science, and that as the one and the other it demands disinterested enthusiasm and eternal vigilance. We believe that it is worthy of enlisting the highest talents and that when it enlists them, it is literature. And we believe always in hoping.

From an editorial by Amy Loveman, *July 25, 1931*

Credo for SRL's 25th Anniversary

Fundamentally, to publish a magazine that people will read and respect;

To believe, not as rote or strained slogan, but as rigid fact, that a magazine is by natural right the property of its readers;

That, because of this, editors are but temporary custodians, their tenure related to and dependent upon their confidence in the judgment and intelligence of the reader;

That such confidence is best established by avoiding both the condescension of talking down and the presumption of talking up;

That a magazine, like a person, requires, in order to be effective, certain qualities—readily identifiable and beyond obliteration;

That high among these qualities is a response to values, the capacity to create values, and the passion to defend values;

That other essential qualities include clarity, curiosity, insight, incisiveness, integrity, good taste, good will, conviction, responsibility;

That what is written is believed by the writer;

That the magazine should reflect a sense of adventure and excitement about life in general and about books and ideas in particular;

That honest sentiments, honest passions, and honest indignations are among the highest expressions of conscience, that there is no need to feel shy or awkward or embarrassed in their presence; and that they are not to be waved aside by mock austerics;

That cynicism at best is a waste of time; at worst, a dangerous and potentially fatal disease for individuals and civilizations both;

That ideals are the main business of writers, and that people will respond to ideals far beyond the anticipations of their nominal leaders;

That believing all this need neither limit nor inhibit a sense of fun and the enjoyment of laughter;

That editing, finally, is not paring but creating.

An editorial by N.C., *August 6, 1949*

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Giants of the Half-Century

SR/W's editors have polled authorities in various fields for their nominations of the outstanding figures of the half-century.

Obviously, any attempt to select a single individual above all others is bound to be arbitrary. It is virtually impossible to define criteria that can be applied evenly to personalities whose historical contributions do not lend themselves to comparative analysis. Even so, it is important to recognize the heroic figures of the age.

The *SR/W* poll covered six fields of endeavor—politics, education, music, drama, science, and literature. The choices appear below.

Politics

Illustrations by David Millman

Erwin D. Canham of *The Christian Science Monitor* put it succinctly for the vast majority of America's editors polled by *SR/W* on the greatest figure in American politics in the last half-century: "I believe Franklin Roosevelt was the greatest American political figure in the last 50 years. He presided over the greatest politico-economic changes in our national experience and led the nation effectively in the greatest world war." Other top editors across the nation made the almost unanimous choice of the man who, in the words of Dick Leonard, editor of *The Milwaukee Journal*, "rescued the United States from economic chaos by sheer force of personality and sent it on a political course, both nationally and internationally, that was to prevail for decades."

Response to the second part of *SR/W*'s poll, concerning the greatest world political figure of the past half-century, was nowhere near so unanimous. Winston Churchill received many votes, but then, so did Mao Tse-tung, Stalin, Gandhi, and FDR himself. Even Adolf Hitler was named by several editors as having the most profound effect upon his time, therefore qualifying as "the most important figure." John G. McCullough, editor of the editorial page of *The Evening Bulletin* in Philadelphia, said that Adolf Hitler "had the greatest impact on the world," while Frank N. Hawkins, editor of the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, voted for Hitler "because he put in motion events that substantially altered world geography."

Joseph Stalin, however, received by far the second-largest number of votes. As Jenkin Lloyd Jones, editor and publisher of *The Tulsa Tribune*, put it: "Stalin succeeded in preserving and expanding a system of tyranny long after its promises proved hollow. . . . He was able to turn a great war, fought ostensibly to preserve 'the Four Freedoms,' to his own purposes." He was, therefore, the "most effective" world leader, though Mr. Jones voted for Churchill as "most beneficent." William Attwood, president and publisher of *Newsday*, on Long Island, thought Stalin the most important political figure in the world of the past 50 years, because he transformed Russia "from a relatively primitive, semi-industrial society to a major military and industrial power despite a devastating war against Germany and managed to retain the loyalty of most of his people despite the ruthlessness and tyranny of his regime." Don Shoemaker of *The Miami Herald* voted for FDR in both categories but, depending on one's definition of "greatness," chose Stalin as alternate.

David Brinegar, executive editor of *The Arizona Daily Star* in Tucson, voted for Mohandas K. Gandhi in the international field and Harry S. Truman in this country. Ernest W. Chard, executive editor of the *Portland Press Herald* in Maine, voted for Mao Tse-tung "for organizing the world's most populous nation into a formidable world influence of the future." Daryle M. Feldmeir of the *Chicago Daily News* voted for Lenin, though Lenin died in 1924. He felt Lenin's impact on world politics qualified him as the most important world figure and that death did not diminish either the spread or the consequences of his ideas.

RICHARD L. TOBIN

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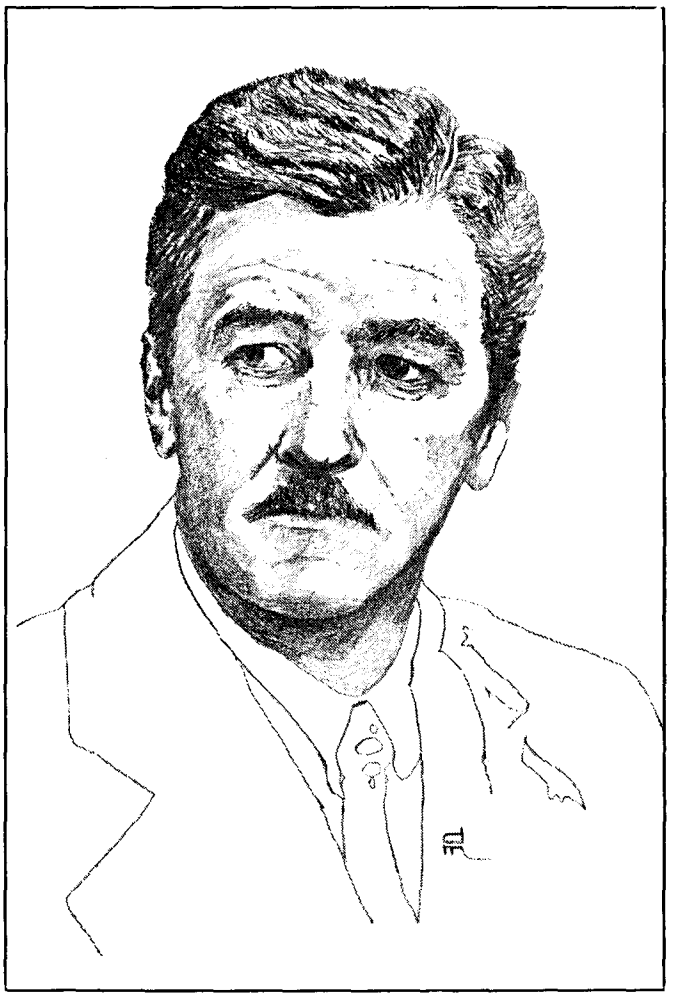
Literature



Historians of culture might one day be astonished by the degree of unanimity with which a number of America's most important writers have come to judge their own recent history. We were certainly astonished by the results of a survey in which *SR/W* asked a sampling of members of the National Institute of Arts and Letters, and one or two other highly esteemed authors, whom they consider to be the greatest or most important or most historically significant American man or woman of letters of the past half-century. What was astonishing was not their assessment itself, but how overwhelming and unequivocal was the majority response. It would seem that, for the present moment anyway, in the immense tidal wave of books and authors that has swept American literature since the modernist revolution of the Twenties, one figure has been plucked out more than any other for the crown of lasting importance. That figure is William Faulkner. As Bernard Malamud put it: "*The Sound and the Fury*; *As I Lay Dying*; *Light in August*, and *Absalom, Absalom*—these four novels, written in less than ten years, are the work of a great writer, no matter how frail or frenetic the 'vessel.' "

Malamud seems to speak for many others here, among them Alfred Kazin, Walker Percy, Richard Ellmann, Mark Schorer, William Styron, Leon Edel. Some of our respondents felt that Faulkner had properly to share the honor with one or two others. William Styron, for instance, wrote: "After receiving your request . . . I had a dream in which the small, dapper figure of William Faulkner swam incontestably into focus. Shortly thereafter, however, another apparition hove into view, and I couldn't dislodge him: it was Edmund Wilson. It seemed hopelessly difficult to make a choice between these two grand and original imaginations, and it still does."

To Faulkner and Wilson, Alfred Kazin would add Robert Frost and/or Wallace Stevens in poetry. Leon Edel, who shares Kazin's and Styron's view about Wilson, adds among the poets T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound: "Eliot was the supreme case of a 'man of letters,' and Pound was, in spite of his madness, a wonderful renovator, a great inspirer as well as initiator, and a powerful influence." And Peter De Vries said, in the briefest and most effortless of answers, simply "T. S. Eliot."

For Ernest Hemingway, who would surely have been the nominee of a decade or two ago, there were but two expressions of support. John Updike said: "Hemingway, I think, came closest to making life with art; that is, people act and live differently because of his prose." And Herman Wouk, separating greatness from significance, said: "The greatest American authors in the past half-century seem to me three peers—Eugene O'Neill, Theodore Dreiser, and William Faulkner. But Ernest Hemingway's bravura romantic personality and the impact of his style on general fiction writing perhaps put him first in 'historical significance.' "

It seems not unfitting somehow, as we mark the close of our half-century and the opening of a new one, to conclude with the words of John Cheever: "My whole concept of literature—and I feel quite strongly about this—is that it is not a singular performance."

MIDGE DECTER

Music

Who in your opinion is the prime nominee for the most influential musician of the half-century that parallels the existence of the *Saturday Review*? Arnold Schœnberg? Igor Stravinsky? Béla Bartók? Whichever way your favor inclines, you have a segment of support in the opinions expressed by a representative group of music critics here and abroad. Of 20 polled, approximately a dozen responded.

If one response said Stravinsky, the next was likely to be Schœnberg. If that was followed by another Schœnberg, the fourth was predestined to be Stravinsky. A deviation on behalf of Bartók came from one respondent, another for Mahler, and a third for Debussy. But no more than one for each. Harold Schonberg of *The New York Times* drew the issue neatly: Stravinsky for the first half of the period, Schœnberg for the second. This curiously reverses the order of their presence or absence on the world scene. Schœnberg died in 1951, before his preeminence—in the Schonberg view—emerged, whereas Stravinsky was alive and productive as late as 1971.

But this is by no means unprecedented. It is, in fact, a recurrent phenomenon in music. As of 1911, when Gustav Mahler died, the worth of his achievement was extolled by

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a relative handful of kindred spirits, whereas the esteem for Richard Strauss was worldwide. Within a decade the Strauss curve began to decline as Mahler's, steadily if slowly, began to rise. In time the upward trend on Mahler's behalf met and passed Strauss's receding one.

With Schœnberg and Stravinsky, the lines are rather differently drawn. Without question, Stravinsky has added more to the store of enduring music than has any other composer of the period. He has typified a force, exemplified an impulse, concentrated a body of expression without which the period following the deaths of Debussy, Falla, Ravel, Elgar, Puccini, Rachmaninoff—to mention but a half-dozen —would have been barren indeed.

But "influence" raises a different issue, and the *SR/W* question was purposely designed to elicit responses relating to the present and future of music as well as to its immediate past. It is evident that the responses mirror the underlying dilemma that has confronted the creators of music in these 50 years: is the dynamism of music affirmed by one who has extended what I would describe as "the perimeter of the possible" or is it confirmed by one who has declared that all boundaries were null and void and that a disregard for them would lead to a broad panorama of new possibilities?

In the grand design of music, it is now apparent, each had a prodigious, if polar, part to play. Ever since Richard Wagner—whose death in 1883 is coming close to being a century behind us—cast his mighty spell, the capacity of the tonal language to tolerate greater variation or innovation has been subject to doubt and to denial.

Across the decades experimentation was constant. Charles Ives worked with limited technical skills to make superimposition a way of musical life: it was comparable, in the tonal medium, to the double vision exploited by Picasso in one of his phases. Ives applied his inherent poetic perceptions with the greatest success in *Three Places in New England* but repeated his formulation endlessly. Edgard Varèse invented electronic music before the means to perform it existed. The terrain he imagined has since been discovered and explored, but whether it will yield products suitable for general consumption remains to be demonstrated. Henry Cowell's tone clusters, George Antheil's *Ballet mécanique*, and inevitably, John Cage's *Four Minutes and Thirty-Three Seconds* (during which a pianist sits at a keyboard but does not play) were all exploitations of sonority (or the lack of it) supreme.

With so much change in the air, and such basic physical concepts as pitch and tonality under attack, it is conceivable that the whole structure of music could have fallen and been fragmented without a strong, balancing counterthrust. But always over the decades, there was the intensely living presence of Stravinsky to assert a contrary and controlling effort in opposition. Was *Le Sacre* truly the wave of the future? No more so, he argued in tone if not in words, than *L'Histoire du soldat, Les Noces, Pulcinella,* the *Symphonie des psaumes, Orpheus,* or *Agon.*

Under the inspection of such disciples of Schœnberg as Alban Berg and Anton von Webern, his "method" was amended and rendered less rigid, with certain aspects of it—such as the use of a tone "row" as the internal vocabulary for a given piece—detached from the larger scheme. The outcome has been to permit options more suitable to the expression of individuality, and to enable even composers so basically conditioned to tonality as Britten and Ginastera to vary their language productively.

Not all the rough waters that confronted the musical ship of state 50 years ago have been traversed, but there may be smoother sailing in the future with Schœnberg's farsighted course subjected to Stravinsky's corrective force.

IRVING KOLODIN

How the Critics Responded

Arnold Schœnberg

"The frontiers he explored—or, at least, suggested, have been reached in one way or another by virtually every major composer since. . . . It was Schœnberg who first indicated, and partially paved, the road music was to follow in his own time and beyond. . . ." Alan Rich, *New York* magazine

"He invented a new musical language; a new technique of composition; the new idea of using tone color for musical forms." Hans H. Stuckenschmidt, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*

"He evolved a way of composing—specifically a way of choosing pitches—by which an enormous amount of the music written in the last 50 years has been touched. . . ." Michael Steinberg, *The Boston Globe*

Igor Stravinsky

"On the grounds of his early triumphs and the genius that

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moved through the *Symphony of Psalms, Persephone, Apollo,* Stravinsky's influence on Copland-Bernstein, Messiaen-Boulez, and the Boulanger axis from Paris all across this country seems overwhelming." Paul Hume, *The Washington Post*

"I would reply with the words used by Lincoln Kirstein at the time of Stravinsky's seventy-fifth birthday: 'He heard first for us all.' " Martin Bernheimer, *Los Angeles Times*

"Because he influenced everybody and because he left behind him a larger body of what appears to be durable work than any other twentieth-century composer, including Puccini." Desmond Shawe-Taylor, *Sunday Times*, London

"He is the paradigm figure of the 20th-century composer: pluralistic in both the influences he reveals and the influences he passes on to others. . . . He remained 'contemporary' and controversial to his death." Robert Marsh, *Chicago Sun-Times*

Stravinsky-Schœnberg

"For the first half of the century, Stravinsky, overwhelmingly. For the second half, Schœnberg. Some will say Webern, but without Schœnberg, no Webern or Boulez for that matter." Harold Schonberg, *The New York Times*

Béla Bartók

"I could easily say 'Stravinsky.' He had a greater influence on the ticket-buying general public. . . . Then there is the influence that has been exerted on composers and performers. . . . Surely Webern should be listed. . . . Stockhausen . . . Cage. . . . My own tastes inform me of the overriding greatness of Béla Bartók, the composer I feel will most likely dominate the musical history of the last half-century. . . ." John Ardoin, *The Dallas Morning News*

Gustav Mahler

"He turned Schœnberg toward the direction that has changed all music in this half-century. . . ." William Mann, *The Times*, London

Claude Achille Debussy

"My selection is based on the following reasons: His continuing influence in persuading other composers that there are serious (as distinct from merely exotic) alternatives to the Western European tradition. . . ." Roger Covell, *The Sydney Morning Herald*

Drama

In its recent poll, every one of *Saturday Review/World*'s jurors, all of whom were adult theatergoers in 1924 and who are still writing drama criticism in 1974, agreed that Eugene O'Neill is the greatest American playwright of the last 50 years.

Brooks Atkinson, drama critic for *The New York Times*, 1925–42 and 1946–60, commented, "He has power, he is an excellent theater craftsman, and his choice of subjects is various and adventuresome. Claudia Cassidy, critic-at-large, called O'Neill "the brooding giant who wrestled with a vaulting imagination and the English language, who created his own world of theater with peaks and crags and valleys, and crowned it with the savage wrenching compassionate splendor of *Long Day's Journey Into Night*." Elliot Norton, drama critic for the *Boston Herald-American*, stated, "Although none of his plays, it seems to me, matches in grace or grandeur Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, his whole body of work is unique and extraordinary in its honest groping after the human image."

Second to O'Neill came Tennessee Williams, whom Atkinson praised by saying, "He transmutes theater into poetry." Ms. Cassidy called Williams "the poet of frustration, the man whose musician's ear is part of his gift for words that light up the stage and hold its audience captive. A southern romantic with a touch of Gothic and that rueful streak of illuminating laughter."

The consensus third choice was Thornton Wilder. Honorable mention was made of Albee, Hellman, Kaufman, Miller, and Saroyan.

There was less agreement about the greatest foreign playwright. However,

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Sean O'Casey edged out another Irish expatriate, Samuel Beckett, by a narrow margin. Atkinson preferred O'Casey, "because of his humanity and exuberant literary style," and George Oppenheimer, Sunday drama critic for *Newsday*, "because *The Plough and the Stars* and *Juno and the Paycock* are two of the great plays of our time."

Norton chose Beckett because "although his vision is clouded and he sees less than the greatest dramatists have, he probes deeply. In a handful of plays of which *Waiting for Godot* is preeminent, he shows us the face of our times."

There was also strong support for Harold Pinter ("a mesmeric fellow who lures you into enigmas spun in an aura of claustrophobic suffocation, then walks away calmly, letting you get out the best you can"—Cassidy), Jean Anouilh ("because his mood of disillusioned romanticism is close to my heart"—Richard Watts, drama critic for the *New York Post*), Jean Giraudoux ("because of his humor and sanity"—Atkinson), and Bertolt Brecht (whom Harold Clurman, drama critic for *The Nation*, rated ahead of Beckett, saying: "He was an innovator in theatrical form, a master stylist whose writing embodies a content of signal modern import"). Coward, Durrenmatt, Ionesco, Genet, Osborne, Duras, Betti, Sartre, and Stoppard were also mentioned.

Clurman, who is fervently opposed to "greatests" and "bests," responded by saying, "I choose Eugene O'Neill as the best native playwright of our (or any other) time. His work has the greatest variety and scope, the profoundest feeling, the deepest meaning, the most poignant relevance to the American experience. The best American playwright since O'Neill is Tennessee Williams."

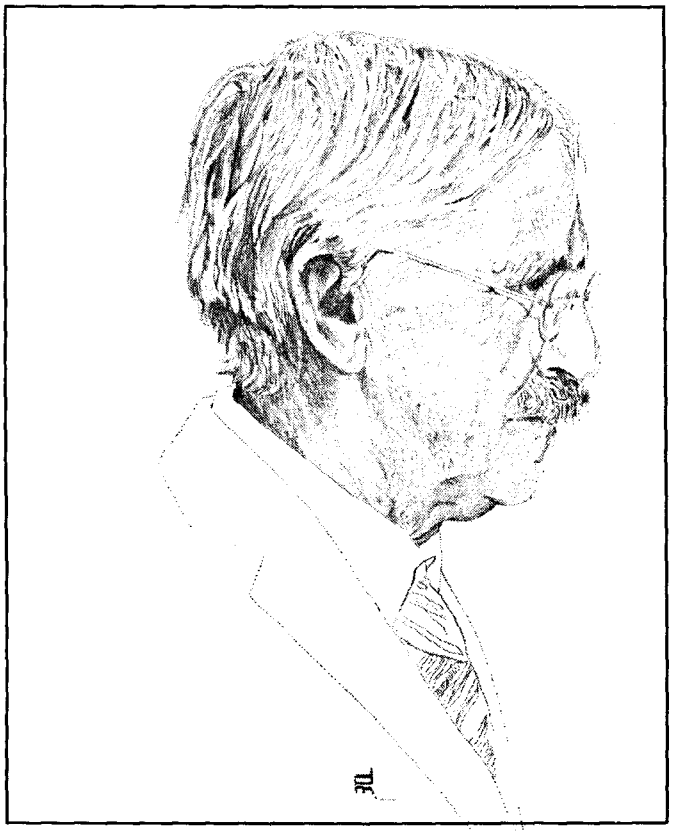
Atkinson places George Bernard Shaw ahead of O'Casey because Shaw's "intellectually brilliant" plays dominated the theater for so many of the post-1924 years.

HENRY HEWES

Education

In response to *SR/W*'s recent poll, most of the panel of distinguished educators named the great philosopher and educational innovator John Dewey as the most influential figure in American education during the past half-century. But their reasons vary—and not all agree.

"It has to be Dewey," asserts Milton R. Stern, dean of University Extension, University of California, Berkeley. "More than anyone else he made us aware—luminously aware—of the students we teach as the alpha and omega of our thinking about curriculum, methods, and the organization of education. Indeed," he adds, "I'd allege that he is the only *great* educator in our history."



John H. Fischer, president of Columbia's Teachers College, agrees that the influence of no other modern American educator can compare with Dewey's impact on educational thought. "His concern for democratic and humane values, his respect for the integrity of the individual, and his perception of the relation between means and ends permeate every part of our educational system."

"No individual has influenced the thinking of American educators more," says Theodore R. Sizer, headmaster of Phillips Academy, "and no one's ideas have endured so well as conditions have changed. James Bryant Conant called Dewey a man who, if he had not existed, would have had to be invented. He towers above everyone else."

Dean of Harvard's Graduate School of Education Paul Ylvisaker argues not only that Dewey's influence on education has not diminished over the years, but that it has "risen in the past generation and is rising still as we try to find the right balance between individual development and social responsibility."

John I. Goodlad, dean of the Graduate School of Education, U.C.L.A., found it difficult to confine his selection to a single individual. "I would have to name John Dewey and E. L. Thorndike," he says. "I put them together because they so well represent the productive dimension between humanism and behaviorism that has influenced American education so much throughout the twentieth century. The most enduring part of Dewey's work, I think, has to do with the importance of the individual and the individual's interpretation of his personal experience. By contrast, Thorndike's influence has been in the ordering of subject matter and was carried out largely through his influence on textbooks. On one occasion a friend questioned, 'What might have happened in American education if Thorndike had won over Dewey in influence?' I wonder if it is not just the opposite. Thorndike got into the textbooks used by millions of children."

Paul Woodring, distinguished service professor at Western Washington State College, and *SR*'s education editor, 1960–66, on the other hand, finds it impossible to single out any one educator as the "most important" in the past half-century. "Maybe our real problem in recent decades," he says, "has been the lack of effective intellectual leadership in education."

Dr. Helen Wise, immediate past president of the National Education Association, departs from the conclusions of her

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colleagues by asserting that the most powerful influence on education in the past 50 years was not any single individual, but "the rise of constructive student power. Children and youth are now teaching adults—by example," she says. "They are challenging hypocrisy and searching for more appropriate values for our times. This phenomenon didn't just happen. This spirit of inquiry didn't spring from television ads. Teachers in this country should feel a warm glow as they analyze what is happening. The importance of great teaching is being felt."

JAMES CASS

Science

If only Einstein hadn't done all his major work *before* 1924. . . ." This was the recurrent regret expressed in nearly every conversation resulting from *SR/W*'s poll as to the greatest scientific figure of the past half-century. Physicist Gerald Holton of Harvard thinks there is still a chance that Einstein's late-in-life efforts to arrive at a unified field theory may ultimately turn out to be more acceptable than they have been so far. In that case, even his work after 1924 might still qualify him as the greatest.

If only. But 1924 *was* our arbitrary cutoff date. This cleanly removed some candidates—those who did their major work before 1924 but who continued to live and do some research long after. But it rendered others somewhat ambiguous. Niels Bohr, for instance, did most of his important work before 1924, but not all. The same is true of Sigmund Freud—if you count him as a scientist. "How do you define science, anyway?" asked physicist Samuel Goudsmit of Brookhaven, "and what do you mean by the greatest? Greatest at what?" He admitted, though, that he would cheerfully nominate Einstein as the scientist of the century without the need for further definition.

Defining what you mean by science is not easy. "Would you, for instance," asked John Gagnon, sociologist, of the State University of New York at Stony Brook, "include a sex researcher like Alfred Kinsey? Or a psychologist—say, B. F. Skinner?" Biologist René Dubos of Rockefeller University was intrigued by mathematical types—information theorists and cyberneticists such as John Von Neumann and Norbert Wiener; but others felt that because the product of their endeavors was the computer industry, perhaps this group should be considered as belonging more to engineering and technology than to science. Holton wondered about a medical scientist such as Jonas Salk, but others classified developments like the polio vaccine as being more in the realm of medical technology than of biological science.

"This has been a half-century of great science," said Gerard Piel, publisher of *Scientific American*, "and it is studded with great names. But there is clearly no one individual who stands out above all the rest."

Indeed, it took some agonizing in every case. There was final agreement, however, that biology was where the most important developments had taken place—especially in molecular genetics—and that the most important single breakthrough was the elucidation of the architecture of the DNA molecule, which led to the cracking of the genetic code. Inasmuch as it was the joint discovery of James D. Watson and Francis H. C. Crick (who are often spoken of as "Watsonandcrick," as if it were one word), the "greatest scientist" of the half-century, in our poll, turned out to be the partnership of Watson and Crick. (Each has gone on to do other, independent research.)

Even this choice was a hard compromise. "What of biologists such as Bernal, Monod, Jacob, Kornberg, Nirenberg,

and so on?" asked Piel. "And where does that leave people like Lederberg, Beadle, Burnet, Pauling, Muller, and a dozen others?" Jonas Salk wanted to know.

Among physicists, one frequently named, though never in first place, was Werner Heisenberg, father of the Uncertainty Principle. Francis K. Davis, dean of sciences at Drexel University, put in a strong plug for P. A. M. Dirac, the brilliant theorist of anti-particles; but he finally went along with Enrico Fermi, for the same reasons offered by Goudsmit: Fermi was the Compleat Scientist, the perfect blend of theoretician and experimenter, who helped usher in the nuclear age and exerted a great beneficial influence on a whole generation of physicists. Astronomer Carl Sagan of Cornell pushed for Erwin Schrödinger, and others such as Salk and Gagnon also liked Schrödinger. They rated him high not only because he worked out the great Schrödinger wave-mechanics equations of quantum theory but also because he had an abiding interest in cosmology and philosophy, and he wrote that wonderful, seminal little book called *What Is Life?*, which influenced so many physicists to turn their attention to biology, thus accelerating the advent of molecular genetics—on which Watson and Crick placed the proud capstone.

The final consensus: first, Watson (American) and Crick (British) in biology as an inseparable pair. Next, Schrödinger (Austrian-German) and Fermi (Italian) in physics; the two were so close that it was almost impossible to rate one above the other.

ALBERT ROSENFELD

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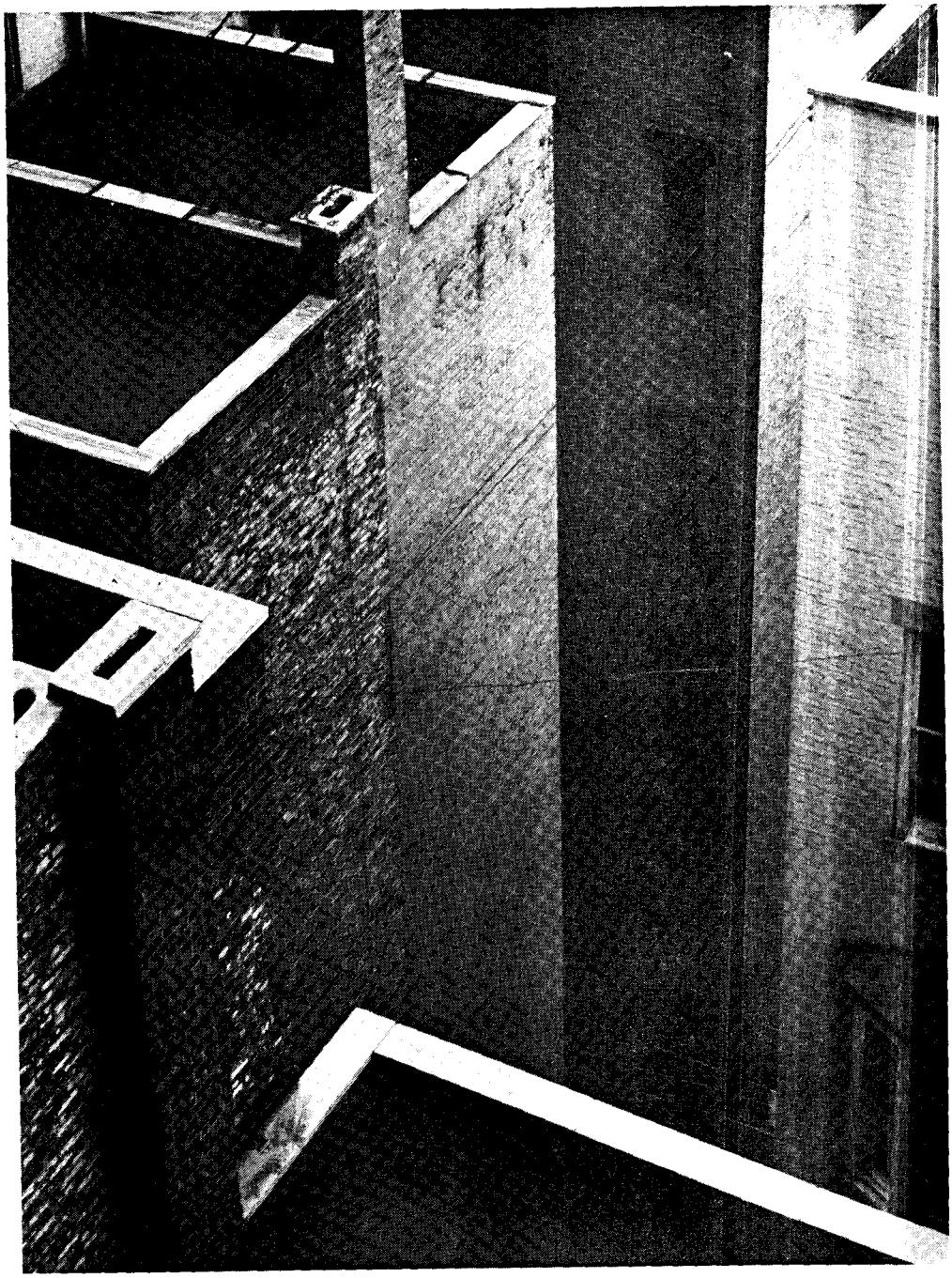

From *Paul Strand: A Retrospective Monograph* (Aperture)
Paul Strand—The Court, New York, 1924.

Photography

The Presence of the Past

by Margaret R. Weiss

Fifty years ago photography was only a scant century old, a wunderkind of chemistry and optics but an aesthetic anomaly with a ready-made tradition borrowed from painting. By 1924 Alfred Stieglitz had long since sounded the call of "Photo-Secession" at his 291 Gallery, pioneered exhibitions of Edward Steichen, Paul Strand, Clarence White, and Alvin Langdon Coburn, among others, and waged a continuing crusade in his art quarterly, *Camera Work*. Additional testimony to his belief in "photographs that look like photographs" came in 1924 when the Anderson Galleries presented a show of his now legendary cloud studies.

Concurrently, Steichen was busily at work interpreting the fashionable and the famous for the pages of *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair;* Edward Weston was finding fresh vistas of realism for his camera south of the border, while across the Atlantic Man Ray had a Paris *vernissage* of his camera-less Rayographs, and Moholy-Nagy was carrying on fanciful experiments in photomontage and photogram design in the rarefied atmosphere of the Bauhaus.

As the dreamers dreamed and the doers did, the critics talked—of Art *vs.* Nature, reality *vs.* illusion, objectivity *vs.* subjectivity, and the other imponderables that have troubled philosophers ever since Plato unfolded the Allegory of the Cave and Aristotle penned his *Aesthetics*. Only the most perceptive were able to separate the three-dimensional reality of the pictured subject from the new two-dimensional photographic reality—one that was born of selection, insight, and emotional response and instantly delivered by technical mastery.

To the far-seeing practitioners of 50 years ago, camera art was a matter neither of faithfully copying nature nor of falsely rendering it in manipulated images mimicking easel art. They regarded photography as a unique medium, with means and techniques uniquely its own. Only by understanding the camera's potentialities as well as its limitations could the man behind the lens expect to create anything of aesthetic merit. One of the earliest and strongest exponents of this doctrine was Paul Strand, who deplored that it had taken "nearly eighty years for photography to reach from the remarkably true but instinctive approach of David Octavius Hill to the conscious control embodied in the work of Alfred Stieglitz." Rejecting what he called extrinsic manual interference—the gums, oil pigments, and soft-focus lenses beloved by the pictorialists—he was less concerned with "art" than with the art of seeing. Forms of objects, their relative tonal values, texture, and line—these are what the photographer's eye must apprehend, appraise, harmonize. Selection of picture elements and their ordered arrangement should take place *before* not after exposure.

The same convictions were shared by Edward Weston: "The direct approach is the difficult one, because one must be a technical master as well as master of one's own mind." Two basic factors, he felt, set photography apart from the other graphic arts: its instant recording process, which leaves no time for stopping or reconsidering, and the nature of the image—its precision of definition and unbroken sequence of subtle tonal gradations—which cannot survive corrective handwork. For him, seeing photographically was inseparable from the mechanics of camera angles, focal length of lens, changing light, exposure time, type of emulsion, method of developing,

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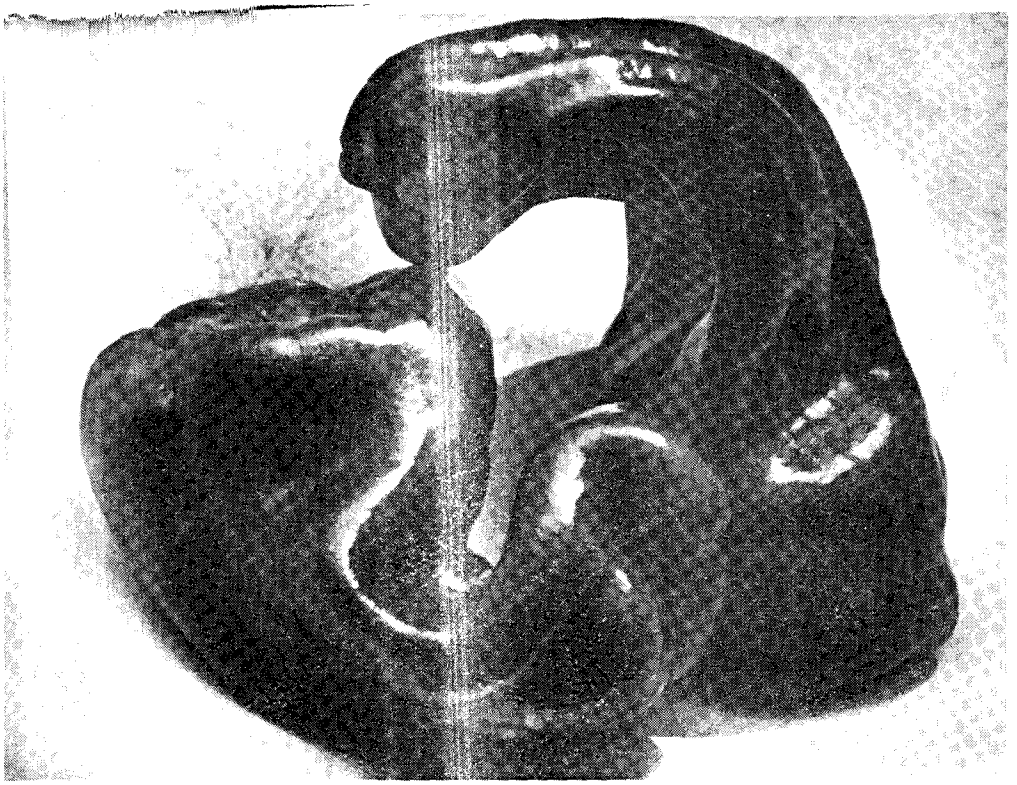
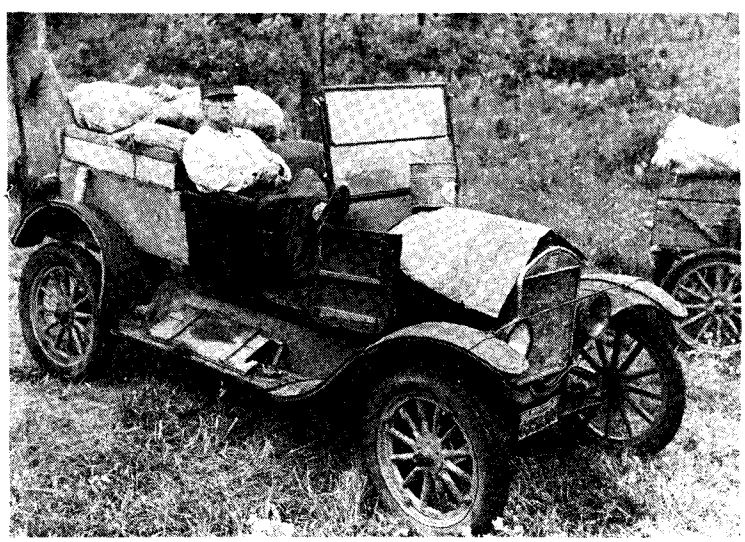
different amounts of light on certain areas of the negative during printing. There was little need to worry about artistic values if the photographic ones were respected. "Good composition is only the strongest way of seeing the subject. . . . The best work of the past is in commercial portraits from the daguerreotype era, records of the Civil War, documents of the American frontier, the work of amateurs and professionals who practiced photography for its own sake without troubling over whether or not it was art."



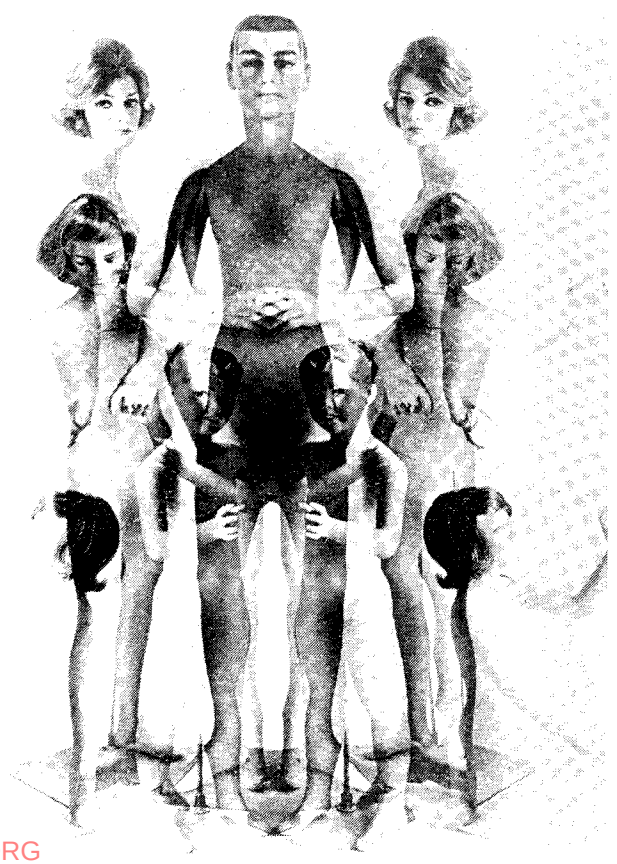
From *Edward Weston: Fifty Years* (Aperture)
Edward Weston Peppers, 1929.

WHILE THE CLASSIC "straight-shooters" were pulling the props from pictorialism's "artful dodgers," German optical factories were introducing small cameras destined to restyle the graphic content of the print media. It was with an Ermanox that Dr. Erich Salomon caught his historic candids of Europe's political prime movers and that Alfred Eisenstaedt covered some of his earliest eyewitness assignments in the latter 1920s. As a star performer for the roving professional, however, the new 35mm Leica was unrivaled.With its 36-exposure format and existing-light capability, it was the preferred choice of André Kertész and his confreres for the ease it brought to spontaneous, slice-of-life shooting. To their 35mm reportage goes major credit for setting the pace and style of photojournalism in the Thirties—from the illustrated periodicals of Western Europe and England to the picture magazines produced in the eyeful towers of Henry Luce and Gardner Cowles.

This was the era of the photo essay and the photo-documentary. Perhaps the longest picture story ever compiled was that of rural America during the Depression years—more than a quarter of a million photographs made for the Farm Security Administration. Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans, Ben Shahn, Carl Mydans, John Collier, John Vachon, Russell Lee, and Arthur Rothstein were among those whose documentation became part of our national archive and a memorable chapter in photography's own annals. Not surprisingly, many of the FSA alumni radiated toward *Life* and *Look* to join Margaret Bourke-White,



FSA Collection/Library of Congress
Russell Lee—Foreman on a sugarcane plantation, New Iberia, La., 1938.



Container Corporation of America Collection
Art Kane—Interpretation (of Einstein's words, "Perfection of means and confusion of goals characterize our age."), 1970.

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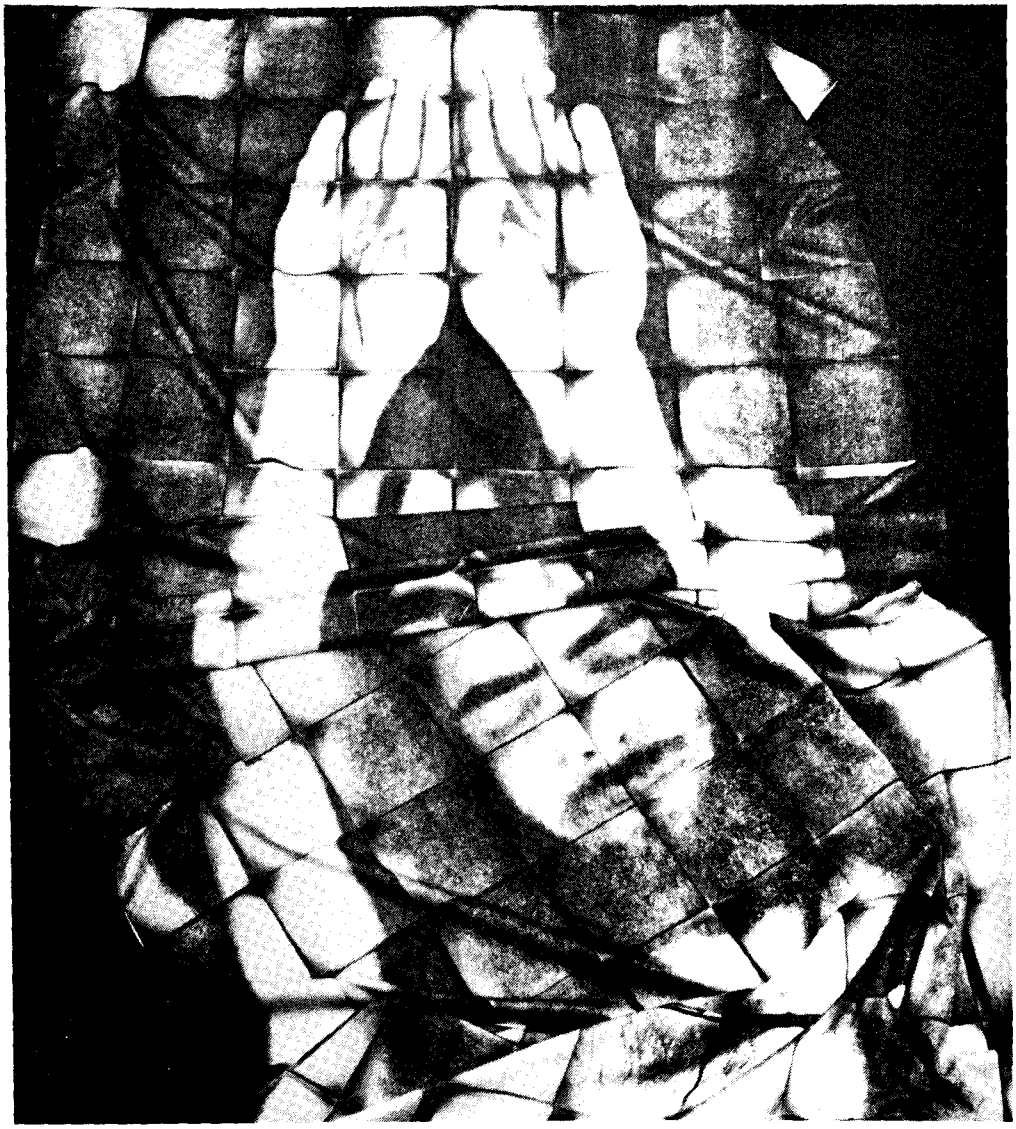
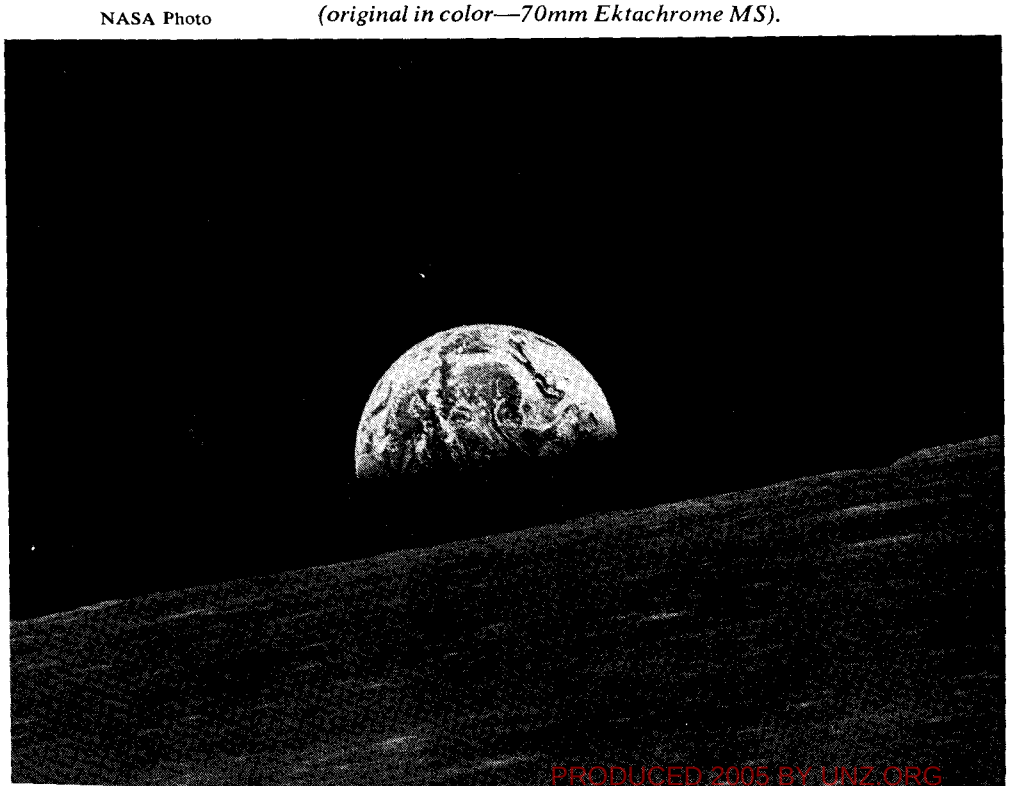


Courtesy of The Museum of Modern Art

Sonia Landy Sheridan and Keith Smith— Man-Scan of Ric (detail of 30-foot wall hanging), 1973.

Apollo 10—Space-age dawn: Earth rising over the moon's far side, May 22, 1969 (original in color—70mm Ektachrome MS).

NASA Photo



Eisenstaedt, and the other staff peripatetics.

The communications aspect of the medium was well-served in the Forties—a decade that spanned the founding of a photography department in New York's Museum of Modern Art and the opening of the George Eastman House as an international museum of photography. In a world at war it was to be expected that more eyes would be on pictures depicting the arenas of combat than on the peaceable kingdom of sand grasses and sea spray. Many cameras had gone to the front lines: Steichen was heading a naval documentary unit; Robert Capa, W. Eugene Smith, and David Douglas Duncan were among the field photojournalists recording the toll of destruction in the best Fenton and Brady tradition. For museum audiences there was still the therapy of landscape to be found in views mirroring wind's wizardry on the dunes or the serene majesty of the High Sierras. But in human terms nothing stated the case against war more graphically than Steichen's monumental exhibition, *The Family of Man,* which has been seen by countless millions around the world since 1955.

While black-and-white remained the masters' choice, it was not Madison Avenue's. The Forties and Fifties saw color film—the 1935-born Kodachrome and its later siblings—take over the picture world of fashion, food, homes and gardens, travel, annual reports, and studio portraiture. Polaroid made its revolutionary breakthrough, too, though only a few colleagues of Ansel Adams and Marie Cosindas could create "singular images" with the same artistry and control as they have shown.

Notwithstanding the Sixties' focus on the earthly concerns of violence, Vietnam, and land abuse, the lens laurels belong to the astronauts—amateurs whose camerawork netted truly heavenly views. Who can forget the aesthetic responses evoked by space-age portraits of earth, moon, sun, and stars? Or the sight of a lunar dawn with the earth peering over the highlands of the moon's far side?

Since 1970, gallery showcases for photography have proliferated—albeit with varying degrees of success and often with outrageously overpriced offerings. Young photographers have greater opportunity to present their "experimental" work; established veterans are being respectfully treated to major retrospectives in leading museums across the country.

(Continued on page 111.)

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Re-Seeing Things

by Henry Hewes

Most people don't want to relive their youth. I do. Among my reasons is that I missed so much of the best theater in the Twenties and Thirties. You see, my early taste ran to musical comedies, vaudeville, and thrillers.

Therefore, in this 50-year reminiscence, I am gratefully borrowing a little from those who were attuned to serious drama before I was, and especially from the late John Mason Brown, my unmatchable predecessor as drama critic of *Saturday Review*, whose *Seeing Things* column was a delight and whose anthology *Dramatis Personae* is a sumptuous resource. As my mentor at Columbia, the late Joseph Wood Krutch, used to say, "John is the only critic I know who, when he likes a play or a performance, writes about it in such a way that the playwright or the actor feels totally pleased by his review."

Looking back at the Twenties when plays could be produced for less than $2,000 and nearly 70 playhouses offered as many as 278 shows in a single season (today the figures are $150,000, 30 playhouses, and about 50 Broadway shows), one must remember that there were no talkies or TV serials and that much of what was on Broadway was the theater equivalent of a B movie. However, the silly musicals and revues were charming, melodic, and captivating, and few challenged the tradition of nominal or absurd plots, pretty chorus girls not very well trained as dancers or singers, and tacky scenery and costumes. For the comedians were inspired and were the masters of their craft, and the stars had a thrilling stage presence.

The plays were generally poor and often served as an excuse for a star to exhibit his personality and talent. Yet a new seriousness was to be found in the plays from Europe; in the works of Europe-inspired dramatists like Eugene O'Neill and Elmer Rice; and in the plays of Maxwell Anderson, Sidney Howard, Philip Barry, and George Kelly, who dealt critically with American society within existing Broadway conventions. O'Neill went from the naturalism of his early one-act sea plays through an incredible variety of stylized forms in his attempts to express the tragic nature of existence. John Mason Brown called O'Neill "a dramatist who was tormented and inspired by the truest sensing of the tragic which the modern world has known." And although JMB voiced the same reservations that many of us felt about O'Neill's weaknesses as a writer, he recognized that the largeness and intensity of O'Neill's concerns ultimately outweighed these limitations. Indeed, it may be that if O'Neill had been a more fluent and poetic writer, his plays might have lacked that sense of struggle that is so important a part of their emotional texture.

Illustrations by Al Hirschfeld

Helen Hayes in Victoria Regina—*"A masterpiece of characterization."*

If O'Neill was the giant among the playwrights to emerge during the Twenties, Robert Edmond Jones, who designed many O'Neill plays, was clearly the most influential in his field. Of him JMB wrote, "His driving hope was to give the theater glory and dignity and excitement. This he did again and again in visual terms as no one else has done for our stage."

The stage was rich in performers, too. Of John Barrymore's *Hamlet* JMB wrote: "The lean Russian wolfhound aquilinity of his profile and the princely beauty of his full face continue for me to be the ideal embodiment of the Dane. His Hamlet had a withering wit. It had scorn at its command; passion, too. Though undisciplined, it crackled with the lightning of personality."

There was Katharine Cornell, who even in her earliest roles suggested the strength and sensitivity that transformed her prettiness into an enduring beauty. Pauline Lord's Anna Christie seems remembered by most as more deeply stirring than Jeanne Eagels's Sadie Thompson in the battle of famous stage prostitutes.

The acting couple Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne developed the art of playing together to perfection. JMB pinpointed their achievement:

> A cat could not have more fun with catnip than they do with the lines they speak. They do not hammer them; they play with them. They pounce on them, toss them in the air, pull them earthward, romp with them, and roll on them. They know how to hold a sentence back, and then send it scurrying suddenly to its conclusion. They never miss the meaningful or explosive word, and never overstress it.
>
> They are shrewd judges of what to underscore and what to throw away. They realize that the very act of seeming to throw a phrase or a word away is in itself a form of emphasis. They are no less adroit in altering the tempo of their separate scenes than they are in changing the pace of their single sentences. What is more, their watches are always synchronized.
>
> The Lunts are never uncertain about what they are doing. Their acting is always the result of a shared plan. It is a long game of affectionate give-and-take. It is a model of domesticity only in the generous concern each shows for showing the other off to advantage.
>
> Except for the unflagging courtesy they show their craft by showing each other, the playing of the Lunts is incarnadined with theatricality. It is bold, informed, and exquisitely professional. They give to it their every energy, holding nothing back except what would be excessive. They squeeze whatever they are doing to the final half-drop it may contain of merriment or meaning. Since their skill is the equal of their confidence, we sit before them alert—and yet strangely relaxed. We are happily aware we do not have to worry for them; they have done their worrying for us.

In the Thirties came the Depression and with it a shift to plays of social consciousness. The Group Theatre, with

Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne in The Taming of the Shrew *(1935)—"Their watches were always synchronized."*

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Laurette Taylor and Julie Haydon in The Glass Menagerie *(1945).*

Clifford Odets, Paul Green, and William Saroyan, was most interested in this kind of drama, but sophisticated playwrights like S. N. Behrman and Robert Sherwood were also affected. The two most durable plays of the decade were Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* and George S. Kaufman's and Moss Hart's *You Can't Take It With You.* The original production of Wilder's classic (given without scenery) was enthusiastically embraced as a sort of hymn in praise of a New England town and its courageous inhabitants. But those of us fortunate enough to have seen Wilder play the role of the Stage Manager, in a subsequent summer-theater production, know that it is also a critical attack on how most human beings waste their lives.

Among the heralded performances was Helen Hayes's in *Victoria Regina,* where she achieved a masterpiece of characterization as she took the Queen from youth to maturity to old age during the course of the play. Oddly enough, one of the best-remembered performances of that decade was given by Walter Huston, an actor with no singing voice at all, who had been miscast in the lead role of *Knickerbocker Holiday,* where he sang Kurt Weill's and Maxwell Anderson's "September Song."

John F. Wharton has written about this incident in *Life Among the Playwrights,* a history of the Playwrights Company being published in the fall by Quadrangle Books.

Wharton reveals:

> The part of the hero, the young rebel, was written with Burgess Meredith in mind. He could project all the qualities necessary to make an attractive rebel. But . . . he refused the part. . . . A frantic search for an alternative began, with no success; there was no other young star with a good enough voice. All of us racked our brains and memories; I can't recall who came up with the suggestion that the part of Peter Stuyvesant be built up and given to Walter Huston, but this was accepted as a solution. It wasn't.
>
> Huston was an outstanding personality. But if there was one thing he couldn't portray, it was any sort of Hitlerian authority; audiences all adored him for his kindly, lovable qualities. Hence, the original idea was thrown completely off balance, and the play really never got back on an even keel. It was saved by Huston's drawl and the fact that Weill hastily composed a new song for which Anderson wrote charming lyrics. It was titled "September Song" and quickly became a minor classic.

Fredric March and Tallulah Bankhead in The Skin of Our Teeth.

In scene design Jo Mielziner created for *Winterset* what is generally considered the best set in the history of the American theater. JMB wrote, "In his visualization of the bridge, Mielziner has provided . . . a setting of great majesty and beauty, full of strength, and alive with a poetry of its own. It is as simple, direct, and impressive as one wishes the play were."

THE FORTIES brought the theater two top playwrights in Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller. Williams's first Broadway play, *The Glass Menagerie,* provided the opportunity for what most critics agree is the greatest performance we've ever seen, in which Laurette Taylor mumbled the pitiful affectations of a once-elegant southern belle whose husband had left her with children to bring up in a dreary St. Louis flat. Yet her spirit was undaunted as she fiercely solicited magazine subscriptions and pathetically pushed her children toward unreal goals.

Williams followed with *A Streetcar Named Desire,* which starred Marlon Brando. And Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman,* starring Lee J. Cobb, found tragedy in the middle class. Carson McCullers's *The Member of the Wedding* is remembered partly because it introduced a new star, Julie Harris, and partly because of Ethel Waters's moving performance in the play.

Thornton Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth* dealt with the problem of human survival after a world catastrophe and starred Tallulah Bankhead as Sabina, the saucy maid. Even JMB, who had several years earlier panned Tallulah in *Antony and Cleopatra* by reporting, "Last night Tallulah Bankhead barged down the Nile and sank," approved, and audiences were especially moved by the scene in which Sabina overcomes her selfishness and offers to share her bouillon cubes.

It was during the Forties that Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma* came along to change the style of our musical theater to something more serious and more ballet oriented. And visits by some British actors enriched Broadway immeasurably. First Laurence Olivier appeared in a double bill of *Oedipus* and *The Critic,* which caused JMB to write:

> Mr. Olivier's Oedipus is one of those performances in which blood and electricity are somehow mixed. It pulls lightning down from the sky. It is as awesome, dwarfing, and appalling as one of nature's angriest displays. Though thrilling, it never loses its majesty.
>
> His Theban king is godlike in appearance. . . . He has become a Greco-Roman statue brought to life; sullen, willful, august, and imperious. There is something of the young Napoleon in him too, but he is a Napoleon

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pursued by the Furies rather than following the Eagle.

At the outset his is the arrogance of a man who feels himself secure. He can judge others rapidly, because he believes he is himself above judgment. He speaks slowly, with a frightening casualness at first, when addressing the suppliants. His decisions are as swift as his speech is deliberate. He dares to take pauses of uncommon length. Yet the passion of his nature makes itself felt at once; the passion and the violence.

He prepares us completely for the man who, in his maturity, has been condemned by his youthful hotheadedness. Mr. Olivier's Oedipus is, as it should be, the victim of his character. His character is his own evil destiny. His instantaneous surrender to torrid impulses, which we have demonstrated for us in his conversations with Creon and the Old Shepherd, is what has doomed him. It is this selfsame instability which has embroiled him, in an even fierier form, in that fight at the crossroads long ago during which, without meaning to, he had killed his father, King Laius.

Oedipus's gradual comprehension of his guilt, which is scored so inexorably in Sophocles's text, is given its fullest theatrical expression in Mr. Olivier's performance. The evening's suspense is draining and almost unendurable. When the fearful realization at last inundates him, and this Theban king knows beyond doubt that he has murdered his father, married his mother, and had children by her, Mr. Olivier releases two cries which no one who has heard them can hope to forget.

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Because these companies create their own works outside the mainstream theater, they have a limited audience. I doubt if 1 percent of American theatergoers has attended even one of these companies' performances. Yet around the world it is the work of these very groups that has drawn more attention and admiration than have our conventional plays. □

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If the innovation of a *Recordings* supplement in the fall of 1947 was a good idea, it soon turned out to be a better idea than anyone could have foreseen. Barely six months later, rumors began to circulate of a revolutionary recording breakthrough by CBS. When Columbia introduced its long-playing record in June, *Recordings* was ready with a discussion of its development by Goddard Lieberson, who had participated in it. The divine accident of timing enabled *SRL* and *Recordings* to articulate, almost alone in the periodical press, the reactions and reverberations that ensued, until specialty magazines began to appear in the Fifties. The effect on a growing number of consumers who became *SRL* subscribers was unmistakable.

The retelling of this history is not designed to celebrate the birth of a commercial coup. It is, rather, intended to demonstrate how it became possible to establish in *SRL* something hitherto unknown in mass media: a monthly coverage of musical happenings independent of support by performers, agents, managements, or subsidy by a music publisher. Advertisements from record producers were not merely welcome but solicited, with no implication of favor for one who bought space, or disfavor for one who didn't.

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The years 1948 and 1949 were times of indoctrination and promotion. They also saw the debuts of two of the greatest of American musicals (some might say *the* two greatest): Cole Porter's *Kiss Me, Kate* and Rodgers and Hammerstein's *South Pacific*. As Columbia had seen to it that the only way the two musicals could be obtained in toto—with Ezio Pinza and Mary Martin singing Rodgers's music and Alfred Drake, Lisa Kirk, and Patricia Morison performing Porter's—was on *its* label, the chain reaction was more than explosive. It was earthshaking. These and some other key Columbia issues (such as the Benny

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Theater

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Why should manufacturers pay to have their wares publicized in a publication that panned them? One veteran of the commercial wars suggested a wise formula: "All companies put out some records they don't mind having panned. Find out which ones they are." Our formula, if not wise, was productive: "Nobody could possibly buy all the *good* records that come out, let alone all the others. By steering people to the good records and touting them off the bad, we are increasing the number of satisfied consumers and enlarging the market for everybody." For the advertiser, the lure was not favored treatment, but access to a readership thoroughly indoctrinated in quality standards.

The LP would have shaken the record world whenever it was introduced. At the particular post-war time when it was introduced, it turned that world upside down, and with it, the habits and preferences of music-lovers on every continent.

The years 1948 and 1949 were times of indoctrination and promotion. They also saw the debuts of two of the greatest of American musicals (some might say *the* two greatest): Cole Porter's *Kiss Me, Kate* and Rodgers and Hammerstein's *South Pacific.* As Columbia had seen to it that the only way the two musicals could be obtained in toto—with Ezio Pinza and Mary Martin singing Rodgers's music and Alfred Drake, Lisa Kirk, and Patricia Morison performing Porter's—was on *its* label, the chain reaction was more than explosive. It was earthshaking. These and some other key Columbia issues (such as the Benny

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Goodman Carnegie Hall concert, which enabled 1950 listeners to relive what had happened in 1938) brought the walls of resistance tumbling down. By the end of 1950, the "Battle of the Speeds" had been won. LP reigned supreme.

The Fifties began with a backlog of talent isolated from normal exposure by war and by the political strife that preceded it, with half of Europe severed from the musical life of the West. It ended with almost every name now, or recently, celebrated either famous or on the verge of fame. It was the decade of Renata Tebaldi and Maria Callas, of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Birgit Nilsson, of the emergence of Leontyne Price and the breakthrough of Joan Sutherland, and of the first fame of Herbert von Karajan. It added the name of David Oistrakh to the list of great violinists and confirmed the right of his fellow Russian, Emil Gilels, to be ranked equally high among pianists. Could Sviatoslav Richter and Mstislav Rostropovich be far behind?

From the outset it had been the premise of *Recordings* that "live" and recorded music were neither antagonists nor competitors, but twin sources of the things music-lovers care most about: fine performances of the most varied literature possible. The perfection of the LP—convenient, cheaper per minute of music than any other system previously known, unbreakable, readily mailable—gave validity to one side of the premise. When the paper by which I had long been employed as a music critic merged with another, I was turned loose to concentrate all my activities on *SRL*. This freedom made it possible, from 1951 on, to implement the other side of the premise. Music was no longer restricted to what had happened "last night" at Carnegie Hall, the Academy of Music in Philadelphia, or the Chicago Civic Opera. The readership, no matter how widely dispersed, could enjoy the best of both worlds as, in ever-increasing frequency, what was "live" was recorded and what was recorded would soon be experienced "live."

The composer always had a high place in *Saturday Review*'s scheme of things, from the first review by one composer (Douglas Moore) of a book about another (Irving Berlin) to the celebrated polemic on Thomas Mann's treatment in *Dr. Faustus* of a radical musical innovator, which Arnold Schoenberg (the prototype of Mann's character) chose to air in *SRL* in 1949 (see box page 97). The ability of the LP to relate the "live" and the recorded made it possible to discuss the new composers as they were discovered or the old ones as they were rediscovered, not merely in words but in reference to the *sound* of the music itself.

It was without question the single outstanding musical happening of the half-century that from the mid-Fifties on, almost every capable craftsman was represented on records by enough material for the listener to judge whether the verdict of "history" had been right or wrong. In the instance of Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and others, the more that accumulated, the more nearly correct the verdict. But the low cost of processing an LP made it possible for almost any enthusiast to be an entrepreneur, and as ardent entrepreneurs dug into the works of Hector Berlioz,

Composer Karlheinz Stockhausen—"Rich talent."

Carl Nielsen, Gustav Mahler—and, yes, Alban Berg, Anton von Webern, and Charles Ives—it became increasingly evident that, to paraphrase Henry Ford, history could, at least in part, be bunk.

The concurrence of the "live" and the recorded reached a high point of identity in the pages of *SR* for November 13, 1954. That issue carried a review of the performance in Chicago in which Maria Callas, already famous in Europe, sang for the first time in the country of her birth. The performance of Bellini's *Norma* opened the first season of the Chicago Lyric Opera. On an adjacent page was a review of the concurrent release of the first recording of *Norma* with Callas. The debut thus became an experience immediately communicable to tens of thousands, creating a community of what had previously been a dispersion of kindred spirits.

It was, from the outset, the quest of *Recordings* to evade the trap that confronts every musical publication: contributors who are good writers but don't know music, or good musicians who don't know how to write. The gratifying number of exceptions, who served both ends well, included not only so fine a writer well versed in jazz as Ralph Ellison (his articles on Mahalia Jackson, Charlie Parker, Charlie Christian, Jimmy Rushing, and others were models of their kind) but also an exclusive coterie of articulate musicians. The results ranged from Aaron Copland on William Kapell and Gerald Moore on Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau to Bruno Walter on Mozart, Sir Thomas Beecham on the fiction of a duality called "Haydn-Mozart," Artur Rubinstein on Chopin, Robert Casadesus on Robert Schumann, Glenn Gould on Richard Strauss, Mel Powell on Edgard Varèse, George London on Wieland Wagner, George Szell on Arturo Toscanini, and Stravinsky on Stravinsky, to mention but a scattering.

Sometimes good fortune intervened to accomplish what the best planning could not. The presence of the French composer-critic André Hodeir in America during a New York season of the Jean-Louis Barrault troupe in 1957 enabled us to print an article about "The Young French Music," which gave extended attention to the company's young music director. It was the first time that the work of Pierre Boulez had been seriously discussed in an American magazine, and the picture of him that accompanied the article is still a collector's item. The probability, then, that *SR* would eventually invite Boulez to write a memorial tribute to Igor Stravinsky may be described as extremely remote.

All magazines receive O.T.T. ("Over the Transom"), or unsolicited, manuscripts. The ratio of acceptances to rejections is a trade secret, but it can be stated with confidence that the total of unsolicited manuscripts published *yearly* in *Recordings* was less than the number received in an average week. Nevertheless, they must be read, on the off chance that the next may be one of the few. I would still like to know the real name of the person who submitted a very funny article about Mozart and his horn-playing friend Ignaz Leutgeb, who was also the composer's cheesemonger. It had to be the work of a skilled writer, but the name it bore was eminently anonymous. The check that was sent in payment to the

(Continued on page 96.)

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(Continued from page 93.)

Connecticut address attached to the article did not, however, come back.

A manuscript received in the late Sixties about Bob Dylan from a C.C.N.Y. instructor named Steven Goldberg appeared, at first hefting, to be impossibly long—and weighty—for use in recordings. But cutting it in half and enlarging the usual space allocation made it publishable. It drew perhaps the largest number of letters ever elicited by an article in recordings. They were about evenly divided between enthusiastic praise of Goldberg's point of view and violent denunciation. This suggested that, at bottom, every rock enthusiast is his own critic, that he knows not only what he likes, but also what art is.

For a time in the Sixties, rock reviews in *SR* were written by Mike Jahn. When he got too busy with other things, he suggested I talk to a young friend who was "a mine of information."

The appointment was made, and the "friend" turned up one spring day in the form of a petite young woman who identified herself as Ellen Sander. A probing of possibilities suggested that her uniquely specific, precisely defined knowledge of the pop-rock world could well be embodied in an instance-by-instance spell-out of its range. The resultant "Pop in Perspective" in the issue of October 26, 1968, not only established her as a favorite of *SR* readers but also put her on a course they eagerly followed from month to month.

My private definition of a good critic is: a discriminating enthusiast. One of the best embodiments of the term was the late Wilder Hobson, a *Time-Life-Fortune* staffer, whose reverberant opinions—in denunciation and in praise—made his columns a must for the *SRL* reader from the first in 1947 until his death in 1964. It had been John Hammond, Jr., who reminded me of Hobson's fine book *American Jazz Music* when I was seeking a critic in 1947. I asked again and was rewarded with a sage suggestion on a later occasion.

It occurred when, for a lengthy period, the monthly *Recordings* section was supplemented by a smaller *Mid-Month Recordings* devoted mainly to jazz, pop, innovations, and resuscitations. This time Hammond's friendly directive led to Stanley Dance. His point of view was conditioned by birth in England, but it was no less valid and frequently a valuable corrective to homegrown opinions.

Mid-Month Recordings produced many little deviations from the practices of the older, larger section. One wild fling at authenticity of opinion produced a succession of columns by the great cornet and trumpet player Ruby Braff. They were eminently readable, but when Ruby intimated that his candidly expressed views on fellow musicians were steadily contracting his employment opportunities, the experiment was quietly dropped.

If the Fifties was the decade of the backlog and the beginning of the debunking of history, the Sixties was the decade of refinement and replenishment, and with the introduction of the jet, the time in which near and far became intertwined. From the issue in which Roland Gelatt took the readers of *SR* to the remote village of Prades, France, for the first Casals Festival in 1950, *SR*'s music coverage has aspired to be—in Jack Cominsky's enthusiastic word—"global." It was on a visit to Munich in the summer of 1953 that I heard for the first time a work by Carl Orff. The outcome, later in the year, was an exhaustive article on the Bavarian composer—the first known to me to appear in this country—by Henry Pleasants, formerly of the Philadelphia *Bulletin,* then attached to a government agency in Bonn. When *Carmina Burana* later swept the country, Orff's identity was already well known to *SR* readers.

The intertwining of far and near is as much a by-product of short-wave broadcasts, tapes, and other forms of electronic transmission as it is of festivals and the visitors they attract. For a memorable reason, I associate with spring 1949 the cultural conference of the National Council of the Arts, Sciences, and Professions, which brought Dmitri Shostakovich to this country for the first time. As I was leaving the office to attend the opening session at the Waldorf-Astoria, I picked up a just-arrived LP of his first symphony, conducted by Artur Rodzinski. At an opportune time, I presented it to him and observed his reaction as the interpreter translated my description of its content. Clearly puzzled how a single record could embody a whole symphony, he turned it over and over as if to fathom what kind of black magic was involved. It wasn't too long before the U.S.S.R. was producing its own LPs, along with every other land, with a recording studio or tapes that could be processed.

As a decade of replenishment, the Sixties saw the emergence—in a more sequential pattern than had prevailed with the logjam at the start of the Fifties—of a new, rich strain of talent on all levels. In the vanguard of new composers (typified in the Fifties by such postwar German composers as Henze and Stockhausen) was an alphabet of names that eventually ranged from Boulez to Wuorinen, or Amram to Xennakis, with banners held high and hopes even higher. Luciano Berio was a new name for Italy at the beginning of the decade, as was that of Peter Schulthorpe from Australia later on. If you could pronounce his name, you could also extol the composer named Toru Takemitsu, an ingenious offspring of Japan whose *November Steps* suggested that East could meet West elsewhere than on the battlefield and that there was the possibility for a musical rapprochement of Eastern imagery and Western techniques.

Needless to say, the work was introduced by Seiji Ozawa, then music director of the Toronto Symphony, on the way to serving concurrently in this exacting office for both the San Francisco Orchestra and the Boston Symphony. Together with Zubin Mehta, born in

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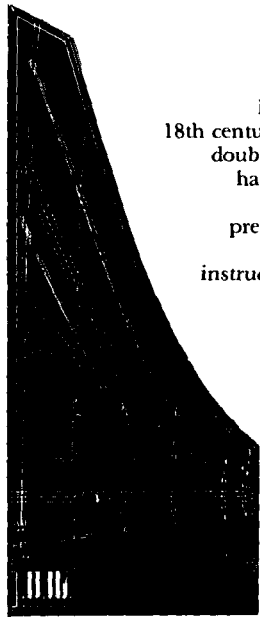

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Bombay, educated in Vienna, and now equally at home in Los Angeles and Tel Aviv, Ozawa typifies the new resources from far places that have been drawn upon to replenish the leadership role relinquished, through age and death, by such European giants as Koussevitzky, Toscanini, Furtwängler, Beecham, Kleiber, Munch, Monteux, Klemperer, Szell, and many, many more. Lorin Maazel was the first (1958), thanks to an early start as a prodigy, followed by Bernard Haitink, Colin Davis, Istvan Kertesz (all too soon the victim of a drowning accident) and eventually, Boulez, Barenboim, Ceccato, Michael Tilson Thomas, and others. Near and far were curiously conjoined in Charles Maekerras, born in Schenectady, N.Y., of an Australian father briefly employed there, educated in Sydney, New South Wales, where he played in the local orchestra, and now considered one of England's leading conductors. Whether one or more will, by 1994, occupy the place of eminence now held by Georg Solti—who was, as of 1954, at a similar point of beginning—remains an individual challenge. Certainly, the decision will not be determined by lack of opportunity.

It was also a decade rich in new instrumental and vocal talent—all, of course, chronicled in the pages of *SR* and then in *SR/World*—from Andre Watts, Grace Bumbry, Christa Ludwig, and the indispensable Vladimir Ashkenazy to the more recent Mirella Freni, Monserrat Caballé, Luciano Pavarotti, Nicolai Ghiaurov, and Sherill Milnes. For those who consider a brilliant start an all-important factor in a career, consider the plight of Jacqueline du Pré (now Mrs. Daniel Barenboim), who had an all-conquering start as a cellist and is now battling multiple sclerosis. For those tempted to pack it all in when a career seems to sputter, ruminate on the case of Beverly Sills, who acquired worldwide fame only at the point when many singers who began when she did were contemplating retirement.

As for refinement, the Sixties saw the eventual establishment of stereo reproduction as an extension of the advantages in the original LP. The new techniques had been in the developmental stage during much of the Fifties and by 1958 were ready for market. But the market, with substantial sums invested in mono libraries, was not ready for it. Many were not charmed by this newest instance of instant obsolescence. From the start, it was my view that the advantage of two speakers—whether for stereo or mono recordings—outweighed the importance of separate channels, right and left. But the engineers continued to refine the whole chain of elements from microphone to turntable, eventually to achieve a sound image superior to any previous one.

In 1947, I had a 78-rpm record player with one small amplifier and a single speaker. Today I have two turntables, each with a cartridge for a different kind of quadraphonic circuitry, a two-foot-long tuner-amplifier, a tape recorder, a cassette reproducer, and four speakers. But after all the products of the logjam, the refinement and the replenishment, my historical perspective is far more acute, my range of listening experience not only doubled, tripled, and quadrupled but also squared. The same may very well be true of the innumerable readers who have participated in it.

Who can say that things haven't been happening, musically, in the world, or that *SRL* and *SR/World* haven't reflected it across five decades? □

Arnold Schoenberg vs. Thomas Mann

The following exchange between Schoenberg and Mann appeared in Letters to the Editor *in the January 1, 1949, issue of* SRL.

Doctor Faustus Schoenberg?

SIR: In his novel *Doctor Faustus* [*SRL* Oct. 30] Thomas Mann has taken advantage of my literary property. He has produced a fictitious composer as the hero of his book; and in order to lend him qualities a hero needs to arouse people's interest, he made him the creator of what one erroneously calls my "system of twelve tones," which I call "method of composing with twelve tones."

He did this without my permission and even without my knowledge. In other words, he borrowed it in the absence of the proprietor. The supposition of one reviewer, that he obtained information about his technique from Bruno Walter and Stravinsky, is probably wrong: because Walter does not know anything of composition with twelve tones, and Stravinsky does not take any interest in it.

When Mrs. Mahler-Werfel discovered this misuse of my property, she told Mann that this was my theory, whereupon he said: "Oh, does one notice that? Then perhaps Mr. Schoenberg will be angry!" This proves that he was conscious of his guilt, and knew it was a violation of an author's right.

Much pressure by Mrs. Mahler-Werfel had still to be exerted to make Mann promise that every forthcoming copy of *Doctor Faustus* will carry a note giving me credit for the twelve-notes composition. I was satisfied by this promise, because I wanted to be noble to a man who was awarded the Nobel Prize.

But Mr. Mann was not as generous as I, who had given him good chance to free himself from the ugly aspect of a pirate. He gave an explanation: a few lines which he hid at the end of the book on a place on a page where no one ever would see it. Besides, he added a new crime to his first, in the attempt to belittle me: he calls me "*a* [a!] *contemporary* composer and theoretician." Of course, in two or three decades, one will know which of the two was the other's contemporary.

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG

Sir: . . . Arnold Schoenberg's letter both astonished and grieved me. Our personal correspondence on this matter had been of a thoroughly friendly character in all its phases. Not so long ago, when I sent him the English edition of *Doctor Faustus* with my appended statement, the maestro thanked me cordially with an air of complete satisfaction, so that I was led to believe that the "Leverkuehn Case" was settled and disposed of. Now I regret to learn that it not only continues to annoy him but actually irritates him increasingly, although he still has not read the book.

As soon as I had received the first copies of the German edition I sent him one with the inscription: *Dem Eigentlichen* ["to the real one"]. It meant: "Not Leverkuehn is the hero of this musical era; you are its hero." It was a bow, a compliment. I have always addressed Arnold Schoenberg, the uncompromising and bold artist, with the utmost respect, in personal contact as well as in my letters, and I shall continue to do so.

Instead of accepting my book with a satisfied smile as a piece of contemporary literature that testifies to his tremendous influence upon the musical culture of the era, Schoenberg regards it as an act of rape and insult. It is a sad spectacle to see a man of great worth, whose all-too-understandable hypersensitivity grows out of a life suspended between glorification and neglect, almost wilfully yield to delusions of persecution and of being robbed, and involve himself in rancorous bickering. It is my sincere hope and wish that he may rise above bitterness and suspicion and that he may find peace in the assurance of his greatness and glory!

THOMAS MANN

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Film: The Bright Kingdom

by Hollis Alpert

Prior to 1949, when *Saturday Review* started going to the movies on a regular basis, little space in the magazine was devoted to the cinema. This was not due, necessarily, to the snobbishness toward mass entertainment that movies typified, but to the fact that the magazine was still in the process of enlarging its cultural role. I remember, though, late in 1945, while I was still in the army and based in Paris, receiving a copy of what was then called *The Saturday Review of Literature,* and reading, with a sense of grievance, an article on the movies, written by Wolcott Gibbs, called "The Kingdom of the Blind."

Gibbs, at the time, was drama critic for *The New Yorker.* A wartime emergency had caused him to be drafted as movie critic, a chore to which he devoted himself for all of ten months, after which he explained to *SRL* readers why he would never again try to review movies.

"It is my indignant opinion," he went on to say, "that 90 percent of the moving pictures exhibited in America are so vulgar, witless, and dull that it is preposterous to write about them in any publication not intended to be read while chewing gum. The exception to the indictment are the documentaries, which have, of course, only very limited opportunities to distort life; frank melodramas, which have nothing to do with life and are therefore exempt from criticism; and the occasional pictures, one or two a year at most, which defiantly photograph some recognizable fragment of our common experience and generally lose a good deal of money. They are so few that obviously no one could hope to find regular employment writing about them, and consequently they can be ignored here."

Singin' in the Rain

Before leaving the subject and turning his full attention to the drama, Gibbs fired a salvo at the cinema audience—"a race of people who operate intellectually on the level of the New York *Daily News*, morally on that of Dayton, Tenn., and politically and economically in a total vacuum."

Reading the article, my mind went back to not many months before, when, immured in a small German farm village, waiting for word that the Russian and American armies had joined forces, I and hundreds like me lined up to see whatever "vulgar, witless, and dull" movies Army Special Services brought in for our weekly dose of entertainment. And, while in Paris, I had already been to a cinema on one of the Grands Boulevards and seen, three times, a wondrous film called *Children of Paradise.* I had, while there, run into some young French intellectuals who excitedly explained to me that in spite of my enthusiasm for Marcel Carne, Jean Cocteau, Marcel Pagnol, and Jean Renoir, American-made movies were the greatest in the world, and that the master directors were Alfred Hitchcock, Orson Welles, and John Ford, with more than favorable mentions for Ernst Lubitsch and John Huston.

Paris then was just beginning to see films denied to its inhabitants during six years of war and occupation. The lines were long in front of cinemas, large and small, showing such films as *Citizen Kane, The Maltese Falcon,* Olivier's *Henry V,* Noel Coward's *In Which We Serve,* and a delightful comedy by George Stevens called *The More the Merrier.* I used the opportunity to catch up myself, and when I returned stateside, I had new fare to fuel my cinema enthusiasm: Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible (Part One),* William Wyler's *The Best Years of Our Lives,* Rossellini's *Open City* and *Paisan,* David Lean's *Great Expectations.*

A look at the Broadway theater of those years, in all fairness, shows no such level of distinction. True enough, Hollywood was still churning out 300 to 400 films a year, many of which could qualify for the "vulgar, dull, and witless" tag given them by Gibbs. But what about the dozens of vulgar, dull, and witless plays that opened each year on Broadway, some to die a quick and merciless death, others to last long enough to give their authors virtually lifetime annuities?

Yet, Gibbs was hardly alone in his opinions about movies at the time he wrote the above-mentioned article. *Theater* was the thing for anyone who operated intellectually on the level, let's say, of *The New York Times.* Others, too, derided the movie public as being made up largely of adolescent tastes, of having a 12-year-old mentality (why *12,* exactly?). The theater audience was something else again. It was automatically assumed to have taste, discrimination, a mature mentality, background, and cultural breeding. Some years after

The Gold Rush

Movie Star News

Ninotchka

Movie Star News

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Photographs: Movie Star News

La Dolce Vita

the Gibbs attack, Walter Kerr explained why this was so. "Words are subtler than pictures," he wrote, "capable of connoting a greater complexity than pictures. An imagined contest between the finest film ever made and the finest play ever written must inevitably end in victory for the play, by virtue of its verbal profundity." Perhaps he hadn't yet seen the Joseph L. Mankiewicz film *Julius Caesar,* with a cast that included Marlon Brando, John Gielgud, and James Mason. My own memory may be faulty, but has anyone seen a stage production of the play to match it?

It hardly needs saying that times, where movies are concerned, have changed. Back in 1956, I wrote an article for *Saturday Review* boldly and heretically titled "Movies Are Better than the Stage." Peter Ritner was *SR*'s feature editor at the time, and I remember his telling me, with a tinge of sourness, that the article had caused a deluge of letters.

If Gibbs had been a bit more patient, if he had not terminated his movie reviewing after only ten months, he might never have delivered himself of those pronouncements. For one thing, the movie industry went through a series of convulsions that not only changed methods of production but also, ironically, gave renewed stature to the medium. Television appeared, and the great audience suddenly took to staying home. After nearly 50 years of reigning popularity, both silent and talking, cinema sank to second place in the mass scheme of things. Admissions dropped from a high (in this country) of close to 90 million a week to a low of about 15 million. Recently the number has climbed back to about 20 million, with films such as *The Godfather, The Exorcist,* and *The Sting* aiding the popular resurgence.

But a medium tends to be judged not so much by its popularity as by its inherent quality and its potential for quality, as is implied by the Walter Kerr quotation mentioned. Gibbs had hardly ceased clacking out the article on his typewriter when along came the Italian "Neo-Realist" film movement, exemplified by such films as *The Bicycle Thief* and *Shoeshine,* most of them requiring the attendance of viewers who were politically and socially aware. The term Neo-Realism was created by Italian directors and critics who used it to describe the relatively consistent kind of work done by Rossellini, de Sica, Zampa, Visconti, and other directors. Out of Neo-Realism flowered such masterworks as Fellini's *La Strada* and *La Dolce Vita,*

Rashomon

and Antonioni's *L'Avventura* and *La Notte.*

Another few years, and we were flooded by the French New Wave. It presented critical difficulties at first, mainly because of the problem of deciding what it was. At first appearance, youth seemed to be the principal criterion for membership in a band of French directors who wrestled creative leadership away from the older school. The Italian movement had been distinguished by its humanistic realism. The young Frenchmen did not disdain realism, but they added more than a tinge of eroticism (notably embodied in the lineaments of Brigitte Bardot and the cool sensuality of Jeanne Moreau). But it was more than that. The directors, when interviewed, spoke about a world haunted by the possibility of atomic extinction. They spoke of their weariness with society's platitudes and with its traditional morality and values. Perhaps it can be said about the French New Wave that it took little or nothing for granted. The filmmaker had to find and create his own morality. When Louis Malle expressed a personal morality in *The Lovers,* so shocked were certain members of some of our communities that the film was put on trial for obscenity.

Meanwhile, in Sweden, one of the great artists of our era was pursuing his own creative path and expressing his personal morality through film after film. With echoes of Strindberg and Hitchcock (a heady combination), Ingmar Bergman quickly took his place in the pantheon of great directors. It became apparent that film was precisely the medium that could contain ideas and communicate them worldwide in a form that broke down language barriers. No matter that the audiences for films such as *Wild Strawberries, The Magician,* and *Smiles of a Summer Night* (now musicalized for Broadway as *A Little Night Music)* were smaller than the audiences for a Hollywood film starring Debbie Reynolds. It was their effect on the medium itself that mattered. The 16 mm prints of these films have become shopworn from their constant showing to class after class of college students across this land and elsewhere.

To account for today's younger generation's espousal of film as *the* medium one must be aware of the effect of Bergman, the excitement he still causes when one of his films is shown in a class and discussed afterward. Similarly with Fellini's *8½* and Godard's *La Chinoise.* Just as the current paperback rack doesn't measure accurately literary ferment, neither does what happens to be showing in the movie houses at the moment. "I got into film," one young di-

All Quiet on the Western Front

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Photographs: Movie Star News

Top to bottom: The Treasure of the Sierra Madre, Citizen Kane, Shane, A Night at the Opera, 2001: A Space Odyssey

rector told me, "when I happened to see Antonioni's *Blow-Up*. Suddenly I knew what film was all about."

Perhaps it's not too much to say that today's center of filmmaking is no longer Hollywood (or London, Rome, or Paris) but the hundreds and thousands of classrooms where students learn film language and make their first experiments with technique. That they can emerge from the classroom and compete commercially—and artistically—with the older studio hands has been vividly demonstrated by the success of films (made by former film majors) like *American Graffiti, Mean Streets,* and *Badlands*. Hollywood continues to function, but it is vastly different from the Hollywood of Gibbs's time. Back lots have been sold off to real estate developers. Some studios, such as those belonging to RKO and Columbia, either have disappeared or churn out television commercials. Warner Brothers and Columbia are crowded together on one lot known as the Burbank Studios. And, to survive, the "majors," as they're still called, must, like Universal (owned by MCA, Inc.), combine motion-picture production with fare for television.

Gibbs, of course, can be excused for failing to perceive the future, but it seems strange to us today that his hindsight could have been so lacking in discernment. The pre-1945 past included Chaplin, von Stroheim, and von Sternberg. Orson Welles had made one of the all-time greats in *Citizen Kane*. Griffith had left his indelible mark, and so had Disney. Movie reviewing can be a wearying job, but it requires alertness and, above all, perspective and background. In fact, there have never been so many eager candidates to take on the challenge. The number of college graduates hoping to become film critics comes close to those hoping to become film directors—the latter occupation, by the way, easily deemed as glamorous as that of Secretary of State.

Mindful of the waiting lines for any opening for a magazine critic, a good many film scholars occupy themselves by re-evaluating those very films scorned by Wolcott Gibbs. They write not only lengthy articles on directors and their films of the Thirties, Forties, and Fifties, but also books, many lavishly illustrated, which roll out, in increasing quantity, from the presses. One of the country's favorite stars of the Forties, Humphrey Bogart, is now a cult hero. An MGM compendium of scenes from musicals made during the Thirties through the Fifties is currently packing them in at movie houses. Success breeds imitation, and others are sure to follow. *The New York Times* plays it safe these days; should a new film be ill-treated by its daily reviewer, then, soon enough, another critical analysis will appear in its Sunday drama section, this time raising the same film to the level of a classic. Two of the ugliest, most noisome films ever made must surely be the recent *Going Places* (French) and Andy Warhol's *Frankenstein* (Italo-American). Yet, along with the merited pans can be found totally approving notices by critics who can apparently see through and beyond the screen to some realm totally foreign to this writer.

WOMEN, TOO, have been clamoring to take their places in the film firmament. Three books published in the same month have reached my desk, all dealing with the images and roles of women in films. The most interesting and readable of these, for me, was Molly Haskell's *From Reverence to Rape.*

The National Book Awards Committee finally took notice of the boom in writing about film. Its criticism award went to Pauline Kael this year for a collection of her film reviews, *Deeper Into Movies.* And where did each and every one of those reviews first appear? In, of all places, *The New Yorker*! □

MY CHOICES for the 25 greatest films of the past 50 years:

The Gold Rush
Potemkin
The Blue Angel
All Quiet on the Western Front
Pagnol's Fanny, Marius, Cesar
A Nous la Liberté
A Night at the Opera
The Informer
Grand Illusion
Ninotchka
The Maltese Falcon
Citizen Kane
Henry V
Children of Paradise
The Treasure of the Sierra Madre
The Bicycle Thief
Rashomon
Ugetsu
Forbidden Games
Shane
The Seventh Seal
Singin' in the Rain
Wild Strawberries
La Dolce Vita
2001: A Space Odyssey

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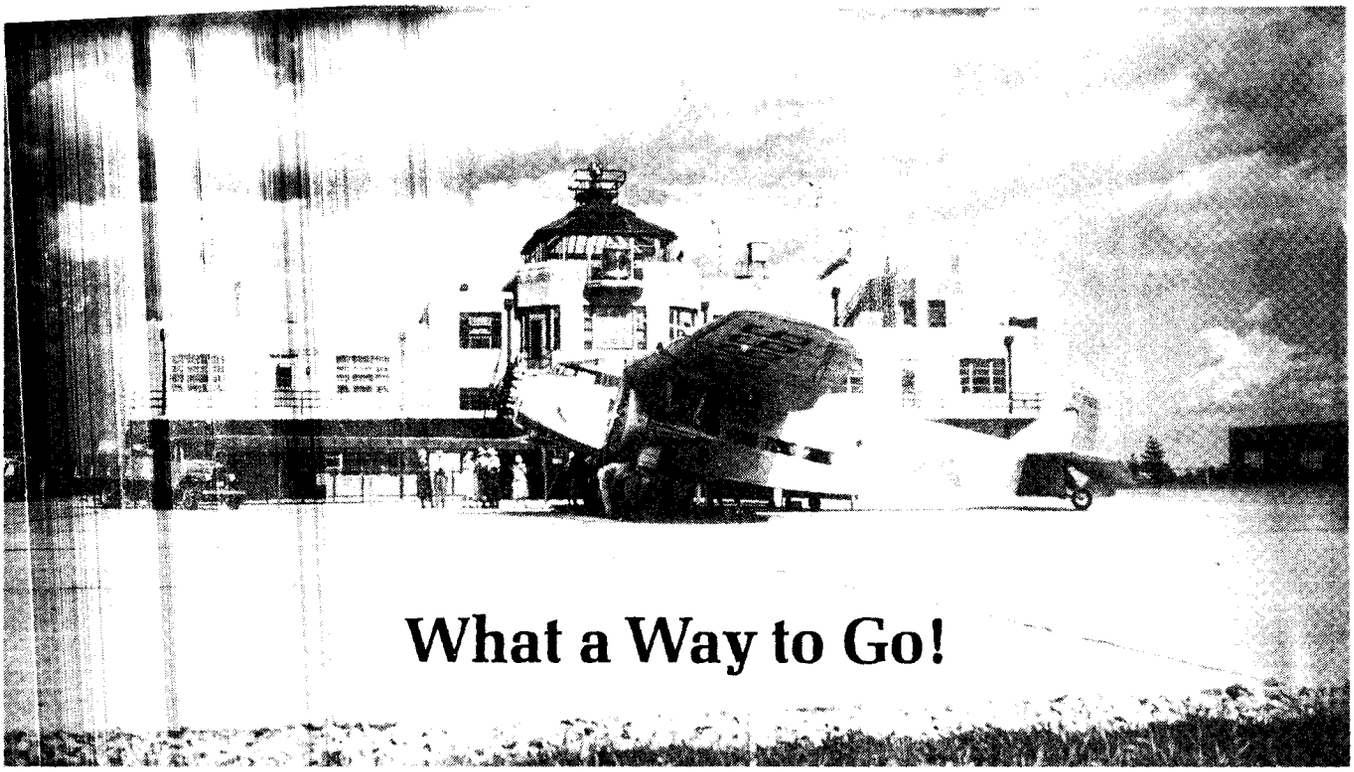

What a Way to Go!

Ford Trimotor—Crossing the nation in the early years was an adventure that took 48 hours by air and rail.

by Horace Sutton

As an American dress designer, or couturière, as they are now called with expressive elegance, my mother sailed to Europe at least twice a year to view the collections created by the arbiters of high fashion who were clustered in Paris. In the Twenties and early Thirties, when America was, as they used to say, Dry, the voyages on the great ships and the few weeks abroad gave travelers the chance to live the full and spirited social life that many Americans thought was not possible while Prohibition was the law of the homeland.

It was the sport of voyagers sailing back to America to try to bring home some of the bottled spirits so symbolic of the pleasurable times they had enjoyed abroad and aboard ship, getting them, one way or another, past the customs officers on the New York piers. As a small boy, I remember going down to the docks to watch the *Berengaria* edge toward its North River pier, the tugs working her, the officers shouting orders, and the gangplank coming down. And there was Mother, looking, I suppose, like some Auntie Mame, though not so flamboyant. I rushed to greet her. "Careful, dear," she whispered as I gave her a hug, "I have some bottles in my girdle."

I recoiled in some terror, an accomplice at the age of nine, if not an accessory after the fact. I sat out the next hour on the edge of a trunk while the customs officers went through everything, and the women in their brimless *cloches* that were the mode of the day, all of them, I assumed, similarly girt with contraband, chatted amiably with the customs men and were finally given the chalk marks of clearance.

The Volstead Act, which was passed over the President's veto in October 1919 and remained the law until it was repealed in 1933, created a generation of travelers, even a generation of literary expatriates. To many, America had lost its verve. The big-city hotels installed tearooms to take the place of their gracious dining rooms, but it wasn't the same. The Ritz in New York closed its famous Crystal Room, Albert Keller, the maître d'hôtel, saying, "Our patrons did not want a dry supper and a dry dance afterward. A change has come over America since Prohibition."

But one had only to cross the border to Canada—going from Detroit to Windsor by ferry was convenient—or board a ship bound for Bermuda or the Bahamas to find the gay life. New resorts were created. Tiny Bimini, a Bahamian isle only 500 yards wide but, more importantly, only 50 miles off the Florida coast, suddenly sprouted a hotel four stories high, with over 100 rooms. Bermuda took on new popularity, and the British West Indies increased its liquor imports by 500 percent. There were some obstacles in bringing the liquor to the Americans; none in bringing the Americans to the whiskey.

Aside from alcohol, there were other attractions, too. Tutankhamen's tomb, discovered in the early Twenties, was opened in triumph. The revelation of treasures that had been secret for more than 3,000 years ignited the imaginations of many Americans who vowed to see them for themselves. That led Thomas Cook and Son to organize the first escorted tour to travel the length of Africa from Cairo to Capetown.

In 1927 Charles Lindbergh gave France a new nearness with his 33½-hour flight from New York to Paris. Flights within Europe had been operating since the Armistice, and Lowell Thomas took his wife on a flying holiday around Europe, an experience novel enough, in that time, to inspire a book.

Crossing the ocean by ship, Thomas set out for London Terminal Aerodrome for the four-hour flight to Amsterdam. "Two hours of the quivering, throbbing vibration of those tremendous motors exercises and massages as many muscles as a ride on President Coolidge's electric hobby horse," wrote Thomas. The cabin was often stuffy, but the crew, suited up with helmets and goggles, got plenty of fresh air sitting in the open cockpit.

Making money, and beguiled by the romance that seemed to await on foreign shores, Americans became the new travelers, supplanting the Germans and the English.

Flashing their dollars, chewing gum, drinking the wine and whiskey to excess, pasting valueless European currency on their suitcases as a mark of disdain (but

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at the same time complaining about the prices), Americans were less than popular. In the mid-Twenties Parisians got angry enough to gather in mobs in front of the Opera House and storm the buses filled with American tourists departing from the American Express Company's offices. President Coolidge was moved to remind Americans, especially those, as he put it, "of a bumptious nature," that they were guests on a continent still convalescing from a long and brutal war.

Travelers returned with tales of woe. Prices in Paris had shot up by 40 percent. The cheapest room with bath in town was up to seven dollars. One returning voyager told ship news reporters in New York that cocktails which were $.14 six months earlier had doubled in price.

In 1928 there were 437,000 Americans who sailed abroad, moving President Hoover to note that "our tourist expenditures alone in Europe since the war would be enough to permit the European nations to pay the war debt they owed the United States." "If you want to see America," some breathless expatriate wrote home, "get a chair at the Café de la Paix." Janet Flanner, the *New Yorker*'s Genêt, would look back on it all years later and write, "The Twenties were a period of nomadization for thousands of Americans . . . they came in droves to gaze on herbage more succulent than their sense or stomachs had known at home."

The car traveler, seeing America, had found a new independence, free of the tyranny of train schedules and set itineraries. But the cities were often far apart, creating the need for a new type of inn, the overnight camp. The first were arranged in groups of simple bungalows, but for a dollar an overnight guest could be assured a cabin with a bed, a chair, and a washstand. It was, after all, a time when advertisements for big-city hotels were offering rooms for $2.50 a night.

It was a short step from cars to buses. Some of the new buses that appeared in the Midwest were painted gray. They looked so sleek that people called them "the Greyhounds," which inspired the local company to advertise the slogan "Ride the Greyhounds." Among the 6,500 bus companies in service in the mid-Twenties, there were, besides Greyhounds, Jack Rabbits, Whippets, Tigers, and Golden Eagles.

While some Americans discovered Europe, others went to see America first. Florida and California, which had been settled by Spaniards centuries before, were now being explored by those who lived in less comfortable climes. "Icicles or roses . . . which do your children see at the window pane?" was the headline of a California advertisement.

"Travel has changed from a sport to an industry," reported *The New York Times*. Lindbergh mapped routes across the country for Transcontinental Air Transport, the forerunner of TWA, and in July 1929 it sent its ten-passenger Ford Trimotors across the country at 110 miles an hour. Using air and rail, the transcontinental crossing cost

Gay cover for passenger sailing list.

$351.94 and required 48 hours. "The economic condition of the world seems on the verge of a great forward movement," predicted financier Bernard Baruch that summer of 1929, but by late October the bottom dropped out of the stock market and America was plunged into a deep depression. At Boca Raton, then an exclusive Florida club, the management had to lend its guests rail fare to return home.

Two years later, in the midst of the doldrums, the Waldorf-Astoria opened in New York. There was little need for its private railroad siding, its enormous ballroom, or for the 2,000 rooms it advertised. Its house count, which stood at 500 on opening night, was the largest it was to have for some time to come. The same year Germany was in torment and Christopher Isherwood was writing that "Berlin was in a state of civil war." Americans thought small, rode in tiny Austin cars, and sought recreation in miniature-golf courses, which swept the nation in a feverish fad.

The railroads found new aficionados like John Mason Brown and Lucius Beebe, who wrote of the ecstasy of train travel. Brown, *SR*'s drama critic and famous lecturer, once wrote that if Rockefeller were to remember him in his will, "I would be tempted to exchange my bed in my apartment for a berth and have it draped with heavy green curtains." To Beebe the train was "apart, aloof, serene, incomparable. . . . People of consequence rode it as a matter of course." The railroads obliged with lounge cars, observation cars, telephones, barber chairs, and ultimately, cars with glass domes.

Douglas Aircraft appeared with its DC-1 (for Douglas Commercial) in 1933, capable of carrying a dozen passengers for 1,000 miles at a speed of 150 miles an hour. TWA, which had first suggested the plane, ordered 25, a success that pushed Douglas to the DC-2, which it sold for $65,000 each. American Airlines replaced its Curtiss Condors with DC-3s, which would fly through the night, a "sky-sleeper" that had room for 14 berths.

An agent of the Boeing Transport Company, then making the Boeing 247, wrote a letter to his president, suggesting the idea of putting "young women as couriers" aboard planes. "This is just a passing thought," he wrote. By mid-May of 1930 United Airlines put the first stewardess aloft.

Pan American, started in the Twenties by a young Yale graduate named Juan Trippe, flying between Key West and Cuba, had spread into Central and South America and was planning now to bridge the Pacific and the Atlantic. Late in 1935, with 200,000 people watching, Pan Am's *China Clipper* roared out of the bay, its destination Manila. Said President Roosevelt, "I thrill to the wonder of it all."

Pan Am turned to the Atlantic, which, because of uncertain weather in the winter, was a more difficult adventure. The leap from Bermuda to the Azores, or New York to the Azores, was comparable to the flight time from California to Hawaii, but pilots had to contend with seasonal sea swells in the Azores and ice-clogged ports in America.

While the airlines sought out the routes across the Atlantic, dirigibles were long since in Atlantic service. The *Graf Zeppelin*, before it was retired in 1937, had made 144 ocean crossings and had carried more than 13,000 passengers.

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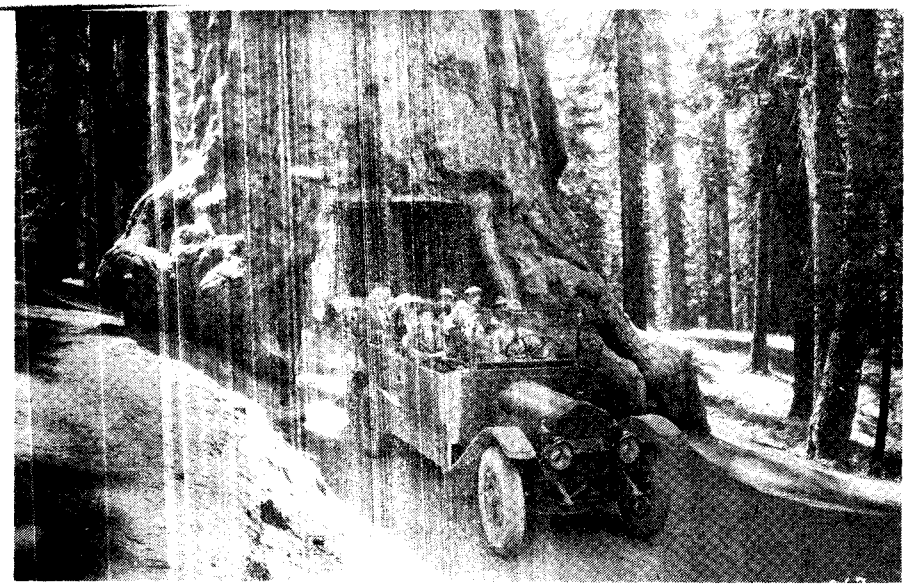

Yosemite tour bus in the Twenties—"Besides Greyhounds, Whippets and Eagles."

The Germans replaced her with the *Hindenburg,* which floated over the North Atlantic at 78 mph, carrying 50 passengers in private cabins. In the spring of 1937, just as it nosed into its mooring at Lakehurst, N.J., the *Hindenburg* exploded in flames. It was the end of dirigibles. Two years later Pan Am opened Atlantic service with its flying boats.

Before the Germans marched into Poland, igniting nearly all of Europe, Pan Am was flying regularly from New York, stopping variously at Newfoundland, Bermuda, Trinidad, Puerto Rico, the Azores, Lisbon, or Marseilles as the weather dictated. By the autumn of 1941 it had logged 433 flights.

No seer could have fancied that these airplanes would one day be threatening to displace steamship travel on the North Atlantic. Seven nations were sending liners in and out of New York Harbor. Midnight sailings were part of the romance of the times. The *Normandie,* the French Line's pride, was sailing in high style. Its 38-day South American cruise in 1938 was sold out. Cruising the West Indies could cost as little as $140 for 12 days on the *Rotterdam.*

Pleasure trips ended with the outbreak of war in 1939, a war that would send millions of Americans to far corners of the world that they had never imagined they would see.

The war had developed the capability of the airplane. Long before the peace in Europe, transatlantic flights had become commonplace. Once war was over there was a rush to re-establish commercial airlines with fast, scheduled, transatlantic, transpacific, and transcontinental service. By 1947 Air France had put a nonstop, lightly loaded luxury flight into regular service between New York and Paris. The four-engine Constellation carried only 14 passengers, but each had a berth, and the meal was so elaborate that 400 miles were covered between cocktails and finger bowls.

Most flights carried heavier payloads and stopped variously at Gander and Shannon Airport, where customers were revived with a new drink called Irish coffee. The Caribbean was being explored by Pan American, the pioneer in these latitudes, but San Juan was an overnight flight from New York in a DC-4, and the Caribe Hilton, first of the big new West Indies hotels, and first of the Hiltons to be built outside continental America, was not to open until 1950.

The Cunard Line's great *Queen Elizabeth,* launched in the war years and pressed immediately into combat duty, made its first appearance as a luxury liner in 1948. She was already eight years old and had carried 800,000 troops, though never a paying passenger. Now she was needed to bring in the dollar credits that would help rebuild Britain. The United States urged its citizens to take trips abroad. Tourists spending dollars in Europe were a pleasurable form of foreign aid, and travel, everyone said, would provide a new understanding among nations.

AMERICANS EMBARKED on a dizzy era of relentless travel, first to Europe and the West Indies, the Bahamas and Bermuda, then to Hawaii, and eventually across the Pacific to Japan and Southeast Asia. After Stalin the Soviet Union creaked open its doors, and a traveler who had gotten a visa and visited Moscow was a sought-after dinner guest.

That phenomenon, the propless plane, appeared in 1958, cutting air speeds in half, shrinking the world, and setting off a surge of travel to places that were once remote names in crossword puzzles. Hotels, many of them outposts of American chains, were planted in places like Istanbul, Pago Pago, Abu Dhabi, Kabul, and even in the Socialist countries. The Iron Curtain was beginning to part.

Traveling around the world became the vogue, with stops in Bangkok for silks or India for snakeskins, then on to Hong Kong to have dresses or shoes made in a day. Jet travel spawned the Jet Set, which grew into the Jet Age.

During the Kennedy administration, the Secretary of Commerce, then Luther Hodges, noted with some alarm that the nation was building a large and dangerous deficit in our balance of payments. We were spending more dollars abroad than we were taking in, and some of the biggest spenders were American travelers taking foreign trips. Once exhorted to travel abroad as a means of building foreign economies, Americans were now being asked to stay at home. The duty-free allowance of $400 was dropped to $100. The bourbon lobby managed to get the duty-free liquor limit dropped from five bottles to one. An anemic campaign was begun to entice foreign tourists to the United States. On New Year's Day, 1968, President Johnson asked Americans to confine their travel to this hemisphere.

It was an inopportune time to introduce the wide-bodied jets, but they were on the way, and so, for that matter, was that other contested flying machine, the supersonic jet. Boeing introduced its giant 747, a plane that, like the old Stratocruiser, had two decks. Fully loaded, it could carry nearly 400 passengers, and it was so long that it had to be divided into cabins, often with separate color schemes so passengers could tell where they were. Douglas soon followed with its wide-body DC-10, and Lockheed with its L-1011.

But the environmental issue was upon the nation, and so, with devastating war still raging in Southeast Asia, was the question of costs. The Russians were nearly ready with their first supersonic commercial aircraft. A British-French consortium was deeply committed to the Concorde, which would fly at 1,400 miles an hour. Boeing had plans for an American SST that would fly faster, higher, and carry bigger payloads than either of the foreign models. The bill before the Congress to provide funds for two prototypes that we would fly and test provoked a stormy argument. Those

(Continued on page 111.)

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"Fundador? It seems to be catching on more with men than women. But it is definitely becoming more in demand here."
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"People like it, as Fundador is the only brandy that can compete with the French."
Jan Van Venberg, Double Dutch, London

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A. Gonzalez, Los Faroles, Paris

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Louis Manzi, Manzi's, London

"I like it."
Armando Campetti, La Campagnola, London

"Whenever someone asks me to select a brandy, I select Fundador. I tell people it will make them write like Hemingway."
Constante Brugnoli, Fantasie di Trastevere, Rome

"When our guests ask for a great brandy, we serve Fundador."
Luis Jurado, Club Mayte, Madrid

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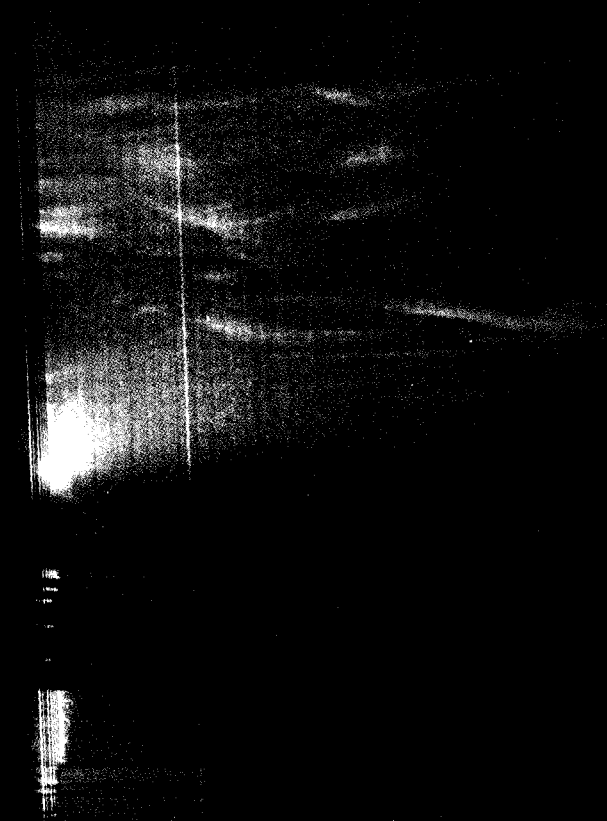

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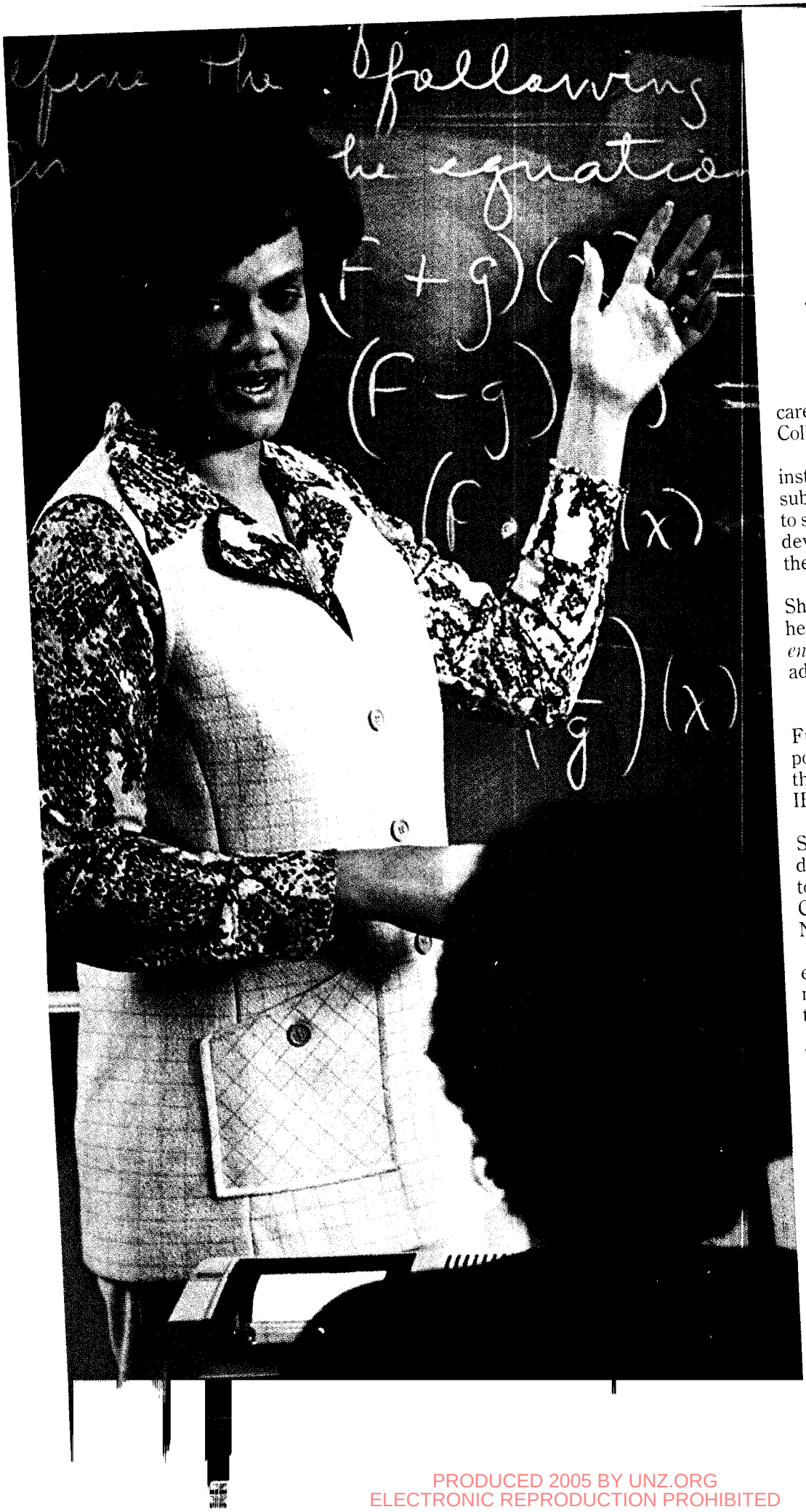

Shirley McBay's toughest equation: E+S+$=Ph.D.

Shirley McBay began her career as a math teacher at Spelman College in Atlanta.

She was an enthusiastic instructor, highly skilled in her subject. And she had a strong desire to study for a Ph.D. so she could develop her teaching abilities to the fullest.

But this was one equation Shirley McBay couldn't solve herself. Because it takes more than *enthusiasm* and *skill* to earn an advanced degree.

It takes *money*, too.

The United Negro College Fund recognized Shirley McBay's potential. But it did more than that. UNCF awarded her an IBM Faculty Fellowship grant.

With the help of that grant, Shirley McBay went on to a doctoral degree, and then returned to Spelman where she became Chairman of the Division of Natural Sciences.

Without this kind of help, educators like Dr. McBay might never get a chance to continue their advanced education.

That's one of the reasons we began supporting the United Negro College Fund 30 years ago. It's why we've funded over 120 Faculty Fellowship grants at member colleges since 1963.

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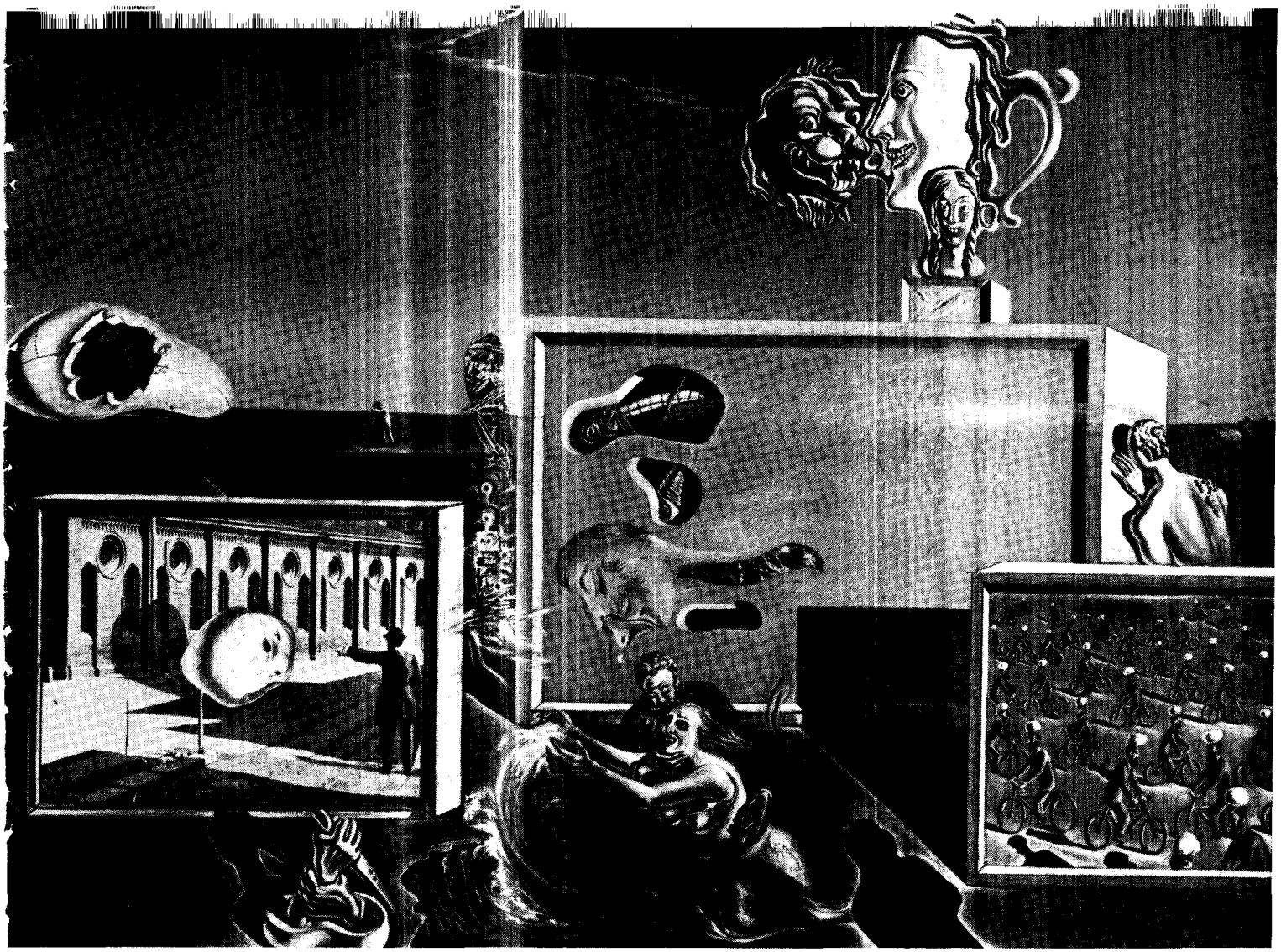

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, The Sidney and Harriet Janis Collection

Illumined Pleasures *by Salvador Dali—"A breathless projection of space where final solutions are always in abeyance."*

Dreams as Reality

by Katharine Kuh

In 1924 a new "ism" was born, one that was to have reverberating impact on the next half-century. Even now in 1974, the art of our time has not merely been touched by Surrealism, but has so ingested the movement as to make it an inseparable part of our thinking. I know it is fashionable these days to discount the influence of Surrealism as a visual power, to insist that its external guise was repetitious and often sterile, to doubt the possibility of transferring unconscious material to finite dimensions. All of which may be true, yet the real imprint of Surrealism on the art of our century is a matter of interior upheavals. Both artists and audience have been conditioned by a new code that is now so much a part of our lives we take it for granted. We no longer question irrational aberrations; we accept them as daily phenomena. Salvador Dali once observed, "The only difference between myself and a madman is that I am not mad." Today the line is thinly drawn between the dream world and the world of practical daily life. Who is to say which is more real, more entangled with our own basic drives?

The story starts 50 years ago in Paris at the Café Cyrano where, from time to time, a group of writers and medical students were mesmerized by a 28-year-old man dressed in a green suit and wearing green glasses. It was in 1924 that this same young man, André Breton, issued the first Surrealist Manifesto, in which he said, "I believe in the future transmutation of those two seemingly contradictory states, dream and reality, into a sort of absolute reality, 'Surréalité.' " It was Breton, too, who from beginning to end became the surrogate "house mother" of Surrealism. He dominated and manipulated the movement; he directed it with imperious authority. He could annihilate an artist—and did if he felt the slightest hint of disloyalty. For him disloyalty meant any divergence from his own strict definitions.

It is not my intention to trace step by step the history of this movement, how it evolved from Freudian psychoanalytic methods, from Dada, and from a strong revulsion against abstract art (of considerable consequence at the time, as witness Cubism, Russian Constructivism, and the pioneer experiments of Kandinsky). New schools of art have commonly been reactions against, or continuations and combinations of important influences from the recent past. Nor can one overemphasize the literary derivations of Surrealism, for they

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"Surrealism set out to create a new order based on the content of our so-called subconscious."

were the fundamental roots of the entire program. Lautréamont, Rimbaud, automatic writings, group explorations of chance reactions, self-hypnosis, and simulations of delirium—these were all stimuli essential to the early poetry and prose that ushered in the movement. It was not until several years later that the crusade expanded to include painters and sculptors, who, as might be expected, tended to borrow an already existent imagery from the writers.

But it was less imagery than a passionate anti-classicism that gave freedom to Surrealist art. The cool containment of Cubism was taboo; so, too, the economy and poise of Constructivism. No longer were purity, proportion, restraint, and rational unity of even minor interest, nor was there to be any escape through Baroque decoration or graceful overkill, though at times a suffocating multiplicity did, indeed, seem related to Rococo decadence. Now that Dada had destroyed all semblance of order, Surrealism set out to create a new order based on the content of our so-called subconscious. To react with words can, as a rule, be more spontaneous than to respond with painted images, for, unless one is a Van Gogh, the actual process of painting is time-consuming. And this was especially true of many early Surrealist artists who, like Dali, tried to reproduce their dreams or, better, their daydreams in meticulous detail.

THE RESULT was paradoxical; it was impossible to sustain original impulses during the time required to complete an exhaustively explicit composition. The conscious took over, yet certain paramount visual inventions remained, the most important often related to an incongruous use of space. I think of Yves Tanguy, who, locked into his personal dream mystique, produced repetitive amoeba-like symbols. He was a painter of the utmost sensitivity, though unable, except toward the end of his life, to free himself from a single overriding obsession. For me, his most valuable contribution was a supernatural sense of space in which objects were deployed in an imaginary lunar-like terrain that, as it now turns out, approximated the truth. I have always wondered why we on Earth were not more bowled over by the landscape of the moon when we first saw it on television. Was it because of similar arid wastes we had seen on our own planet or because of familiar Surrealist paintings that evoke total dissolution? Characteristic of the latter were Max Ernst's bitter reactions to the mutilations of modern warfare, a series of devastating compositions from the early Forties. In comparison, the moon appeared hospitable.

The man most responsible for Surrealism's illogical and, let me add, brilliant handling of space was Dali, who in his early mirages was able to embrace the myriad perspectives that thread our dreams. Near is far, up is below, and never do multiple lines converge. More innovative than his erotic images was his breathless projection of the ambience around us where final solutions were always in abeyance. One never reached a destination. As in nightmares, the route was unclear, baffling, indecisive. This, then, was reality; frustration was the order of life.

Surrealist art never completely took hold in the United States and, except in the movies, presented itself as a somewhat watered down version of romanticism. If mystery remained, much of its disquieting terror was gone. The first comprehensive Surrealist exhibition in America was brought to Hartford, Conn., by the Wadsworth Atheneum in 1931, seven years after Breton's original manifesto. Barring David Hare, Joseph Cornell, and Pavel Tchelitchew (the last far from a native son), the movement in America was best represented not by artists but by such zany performers as the Marx Brothers, Harold Lloyd, Charlie Chaplin, and Laurel and Hardy. Instead of imitating the elliptical visual puns of Europe, these men created a fresh panoply of mad affronts to reason, all of them closely related to slapstick American humor.

Films, with their condensed imagery, transparency, and speed, were able to make visible those hallucinatory states that result from involuntary impulses. Never freezing action, the cinema can project overlapping experiences in unnerving profusion, thus permitting the impossible to seem possible. Harold Lloyd's deadpan defiance of gravity unleashed an anarchic figure wheeling, swinging through troubled reveries. What is real is not his exploits but our sensations on identifying with them. How often have we also hung precariously in just such a dream? How often have we awakened, hearts thumping and voiceless, when words were most needed? Strain as we would, not a sound escaped. The mute Harpo Marx, triggered by some wild paranoia, recaptured the trauma of sudden speechlessness. His stylizations removed the scene from daily reality; it was another world, a mythic one, that he inhabited.

SURREALISM'S outstanding contribution to America was the introduction of a heady new freedom. In a land where Puritan restraints were inhibiting, the gradual realization that all the old rules were inoperative acted as a vigorous liberating force. Morality, conventional attitudes toward design, rules of visual conduct, adherence to the more obvious laws of nature, were each in turn scuttled, though a frequent dependence on verisimilitude did exact a certain discipline.

An important aim of Surrealism was to encompass an exact vision of our unconscious experiences—of our anxieties, doubts, exaltations, and conflicts. Only thus, it was argued, could these states become more than symbolic illusions. And yet, unlike psychoanalysis, the final intention was less therapeutic than investigatory. Take those moments when an anesthetic is wearing off and unsettling chimerical events obtrude more vividly than the "real" ones which can be pinpointed in actual time and place. Both Dali and René Magritte hoped to preserve fleeting ambiguities in permanent, even tangible, form. Repeatedly, they used established methods to break down established shibboleths. A large green apple by Magritte is flawlessly reproduced and when seen out of context is little more than a handsome piece of fruit, but when crowded into a claustrophobically restricted space, the object appears to expand malignantly as it overpowers the viewer.

Not all Surrealists were as orthodox as Dali and Magritte. In contrast, Miró and Masson depended on compulsive methods to express compulsive ideas, though one must stretch a point to include Joan Miró in any established school. He has always been his own man and very much a maverick. He and Masson were rarely concerned with fastidious reproduction of their involuntary

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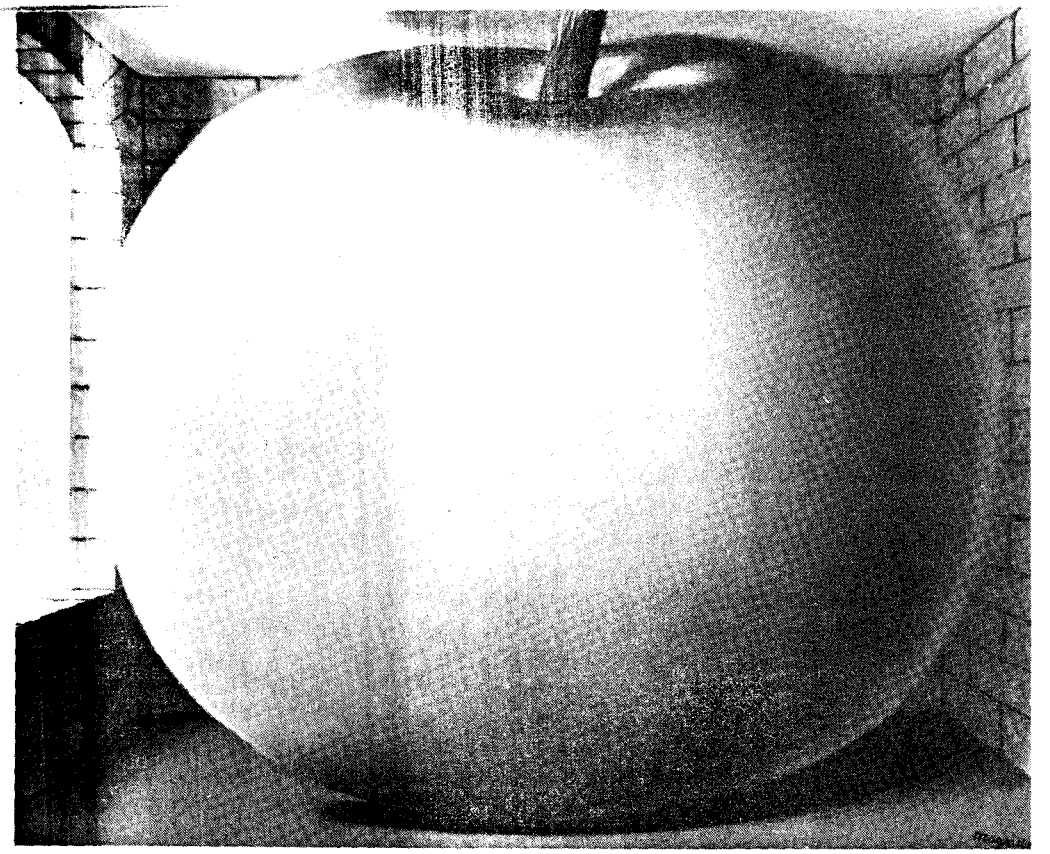
drives, notwithstanding the importance of such drives for them. American painters, notably the Abstract Expressionists, were probably affected more by the impetuous techniques of these men than by the underlying substance of their work. In any case, the Americans felt free to exploit their own spontaneous reactions without recourse to a deliberate probing of the unconscious. They settled on an automatism that resulted from the very act of painting. Without Surrealism, I doubt that Jackson Pollock's webs of tangled, dripping pigment would have been possible, though there were many other forerunners who contributed to his work. And even more important, I doubt that his paintings would have communicated as intensely to an audience unprepared by Surrealism's earlier show of freedom.

It is curious that action painting, which made no claim to excavating the unconscious, at times did just that and with greater abandon than had Surrealism. Pollock's work was predicated on an almost instinctual feedback; as the paint poured out, so too did his accompanying emotions. The pigment itself was the picture. The paint not only reflected his passions; it directed them. In discussing his own work, Franz Kline claimed, "It's free association from the start to the finished state." And said Pollock, "When I am *in* my painting, I'm not aware of what I am doing," which in a way was precisely what the Surrealists wanted but rarely achieved because too often laborious methods interfered. I find it interesting that although Max Ernst's outrageous, startling, dislocated Victorian collages dealt with concrete images, the works remained impulsive expressions. To paste is less confining than to paint in scrupulous detail.

In order to escape Europe during the war, a group of distinguished Surrealists, among them Ernst, Duchamp, Dali, Tanguy, and Kurt Seligmann, emigrated in the Forties to the United States. Directly or indirectly, through friendships, exhibitions, lectures, and wide periodical coverage, these men made an indelible impression on America. They founded no school in the New World, chiefly because their work, particularly in its "Bretonese" aspects, was counter to our heritage of pragmatic optimism. From Freud and Jung to Breton and Dali, Surrealism was a European operation inspired by a war-weary, sophisticated disillusionment entirely alien to American thinking during the Forties. At that time, we still believed in the positive potential of daily existence and in its reality, too. We even believed in victory. Certain superficial resemblances to Surrealism surfaced in our country and were occasionally mistaken for the real thing. Chief among them was a sugar-coated American movement called Magic Realism, which borrowed such external characteristics as minutely delineated other-worldly figures adrift in fanciful perspectives. But the focus in the United States was more on romantic narrative than on obsessive urges. It was at once a result and a misunderstanding of the parent program.



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The Listening Room, *by René Magritte—"Appears to expand malignantly."*

Although the European visitors never developed a body of disciples here, they nonetheless exerted a powerful influence on the public. Rigid ways of seeing were gradually discarded as we listened to the words and looked at the works of these uprooted men. They saw our country with new eyes and made us share at least part of their vision. They took from us almost as much as they gave, yet sometimes the interplay was counterproductive, with American ebullience tempering their fury and removing their fangs. Prime instances were Dali, George Grosz, Seligmann, and Alexander Archipenko, all of whom remained in the United States longer than most of their colleagues. Other artists, however, were invigorated. Typical is Fernand Léger, who celebrated the banal razzle-dazzle of New York—its jazzed up display windows, its neon vitality. "One has the impression," he observed, "that there is too much of everything," and then he proceeded to paint Manhattan's modern mass-produced folk art with an exhilarating license he had rarely shown before. Like the Surrealists, he paved the way for later American discoveries and, through such men as Stuart Davis, anticipated Pop. You might say these émigrés, who were steeped in European traditions, helped open the door to the first schools of American art that were to shine in their own rather than in reflected light. It was not the direct influence of individual works that mattered; it was rather a collision of ideas, a cross-fertilization crucial for participants from both sides of the Atlantic.

We tend to claim that the most influential movement of our century was Cubism, which may well be true. This austere and intrinsically classical form of art was at the same time revolutionary in its handling of time, place, and object. Because Surrealism was often more conventional in its external aspects, it has sometimes been underestimated. The art of the last 50 years owes this movement an incalculable debt if only for a cathartic ferment that so removed all barriers as to leave us vulnerable, confused, and yet a step nearer maturity. □

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Light Refractions

by Thomas H. Middleton

Language and Survival

In 1924 the Washington Senators won their first and only World Series, *The Saturday Review of Literature* was born, and so was Little Orphan Annie (Leapin' Lizards! That kid is 50 years old!?!?).

The last 50 years are traditionally represented on those linear scales of the History of Man starting with the Pleistocene epoch as a little dot at either the upper or right-hand end of the line, depending on whether it's horizontal or vertical. We're told in the accompanying text that the most recent half-century was a real blockbuster in terms of increased population, increased pollution, increase in the number of scientists per capita, or what have you. And every time I see one of those scales it scares hell out of me, because its point is usually well taken and because the changes that have been taking place on our planet during the last 50 swings around the sun are staggeringly different quantitatively and qualitatively from anything that has ever happened before.

Little Orphan Annie is the only thing I can think of that has remained the same.

The most obvious changes in the English language have been the new words, I suppose, but there have been other, more subtle, changes.

In 1924 radio was just barely out of the crib. The hottest program on the air was "The Happiness Boys," Billy Jones and Ernie Hare, whom I still remember hearing, though some years later than 1924.

The Jazz Singer hadn't been made yet, and television was a small gleam in the eyes of GE, Westinghouse, RCA, and AT&T. The iconoscope had been patented the year before, in 1923.

The increase in English vocabulary attributable to World War II, the atomic age, space exploration (which, we are reminded, gave us Teflon), computers, and technology in general—with its proliferation of new terms for new inventions, discoveries, and processes—hardly seems worth mentioning, not because it is not significant, but because it is so overwhelming and so obvious.

More subtle effects on the language have been brought on by the results of technology itself. I remember a friend who had grown up in the Tennessee Valley during the Thirties. "Man, Ah teyeh," he said, "when thet air TVA come in, yeh jes' rair on back an' flep a swetch, an' on come the laht!" Today, his counterparts can flip a switch and hear Alistair Cooke or Walter Cronkite.

Fifty years ago, they might have gone to the movies and seen Tom Mix, Mabel Normand, or Gloria Swanson. Whoever it was they saw, the speaking voices they heard were in their own heads, and the accents were Tennessee Valley accents. Today, it's hard to imagine anyone in the United States who has not been exposed to the voice of Sir Laurence Olivier, even if only speaking about the earth-shaking new Polaroid SX-70 camera, whereas in 1924 only a relative few would have been able to imagine comparable speech.

I suspect that, although it's widely lamented that the average college freshman today can hardly tell a subject from a predicate, the average American speaks better English, with a much larger vocabulary and far fewer serious grammatical errors, than ever before, thanks to radio, TV, sound films, and the great increase in mobility since World War II.

The number of college-educated has been increasing faster than the number of well-educated, apparently, but the relatively *un*educated are better educated than they were 50 years ago.

The simultaneous upward and downward movements toward egalitarianism might make excellence seem not superior but extraneous and suspect; still, I don't fear for the future of the language. Certainly, it is threatened by a few super-egalitarians who preach that language is "only" a means of communication, so if the language communicates, however sloppily, it serves its purpose and is therefore all right.

That's a sound theory if all you need are gestures, grunts, nods, and strokes among people with relatively common goals and understandings, but the future of the world depends upon an infinitely greater degree of sophistication than that, and that sophistication requires that people communicate within a well-defined set of rules. Communication is difficult under the best of circumstances. Without rules it becomes next to impossible.

I don't fear for the future of the language because I'm certain that enough of us are aware of that fact and that our numbers will increase. Some of the rules may change as new needs arise, but rules there must be, and if we're not using just about the best set of rules available, we're putting ourselves at a terrible disadvantage.

There's nothing elitist about the proper use of language. It's a matter of survival. □

April 2, 1956
Ed Fisher

"I forgot the message!"

Double-Crostic No. 1 can be found on page 78 of the SR Scrapbook.

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(**Photography:** *continued from page 88.*)

Reaffirmation of some of the tenets of the Twenties echoes in the marketplace: there is increased attention to craftsmanship and print quality—even when the subjects are those of the Snapshot Realism school. While the straightforward approach is the one strongly favored, darkroom legerdemain has also gained respectability as craft technique serving a creative purpose. It is by such means that photographic reality is extended to the invisible and the intangible—the private worlds of fantasy revealed in the photo-fables of Duane Michals, in Jerry Uelsmann's allegorical landscape, or in one of Art Kane's "Interpretations."

What's more, the contemporary camera is openly responsive to the technology of many industries. Tapping products of the loom, laboratory, or laser research, it finds new avenues for exploration. The latest entry in the *Projects* series at The Museum of Modern Art, for example, features 30- and 40-foot wall hangings by Sonia Landy Sheridan and Keith Smith. These experimental productions are assemblages of photographs derived from the 3M color-in-color process that have been thermally transferred to fabric or metal. For many viewers (including this one), the result is a spectacular display of photo-construction—less an act of incisive image-making than a matter of applied art. Yet it exemplifies the same questing spirit that motivated Moholy-Nagy's experiments or directed Steichen's camera to create designs for Stehli silks.

The overall photographic scene—in the mood of the times it mirrors—is a ferment of soul-searching and direction-seeking. Once again Sheeler's question is being asked: "Isn't it remarkable how photography has advanced without improving?" This, in part, accounts for the notably retrospective nature of many of the significant exhibitions in the past year or two. Kertész, Strand, Adams, and Weston have been elected for comprehensive one-man shows and honored by volumes that span at least a half-century of their work; a long-awaited biography of Stieglitz has appeared, along with Aperture's anthology edition of his peerless *Camera Work*.

Looking backward is not only an exercise in fond recall. It is a forward step in assessing the now-and-future directions of a medium still in process of evolving a tradition and an aesthetics it may call its own. Viewed in that perspective, the presence of the past is reassuring. □

(**Travel:** *continued from page 103.*)

against it said it would be too noisy, that the sonic boom would frighten fish and break windows, that meddling around with the stratospheres would cause the polar ice caps to melt, inundating us all.

The bill to provide funds failed to pass the Congress. Some thought the nation was saved. Others felt that the American airplane industry, which had always dominated the world market, would be seriously, perhaps irretrievably, wounded and that the balance of payments would suffer heavily.

Then Air France and British Airways, which insist they will put the plane into commercial service by 1976, prepared for the Concorde's first dash across the North Atlantic. I was one of the 32 passengers aboard that flight, which rolled out of Washington's Dulles Airport early one morning last fall and landed in Paris three and a half hours later.

Even without the advent of the supersonic airplane, transatlantic liners had been disappearing from the North Atlantic shipping lanes. The *Ile de France* had been—ah, ignominy!—sold for scrap in Japan. The *Queen Mary* had been turned into a hotel, moored off the coast of California. The great *Queen Elizabeth* was gone, and although there is a new *QE II*, the French Line's last big ship, the *France*, will be retired this fall.

The old *Berengaria* and the sleek new Concorde make nice brackets for a spirited half-century. There was Mother, back in the Twenties, coming into Prohibition-dry New York Harbor aboard the ship. The closing bracket is the Concorde, the supersonic airplane, flying the ocean in three hours and a half, about the time it took the *Berengaria* to edge into her Manhattan berth after she first entered the harbor. Any traveler given to flights of fancy could hardly help wondering how they'll all be getting from here to there 50 years from now. □

SOLUTION OF DOUBLE-CROSTIC
No. 1, see page 78.

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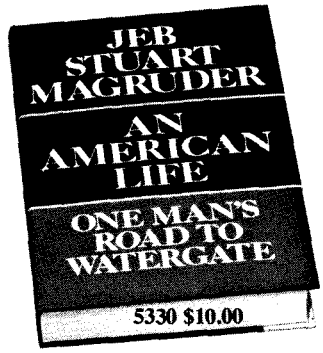

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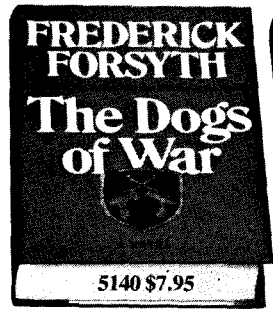

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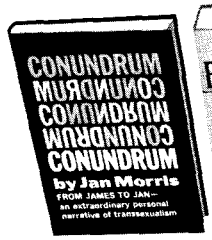

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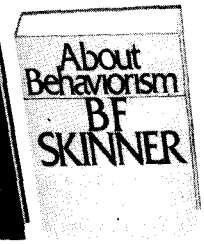

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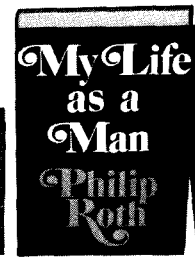

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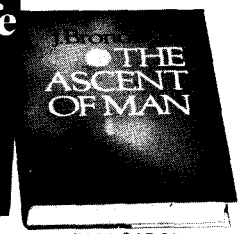

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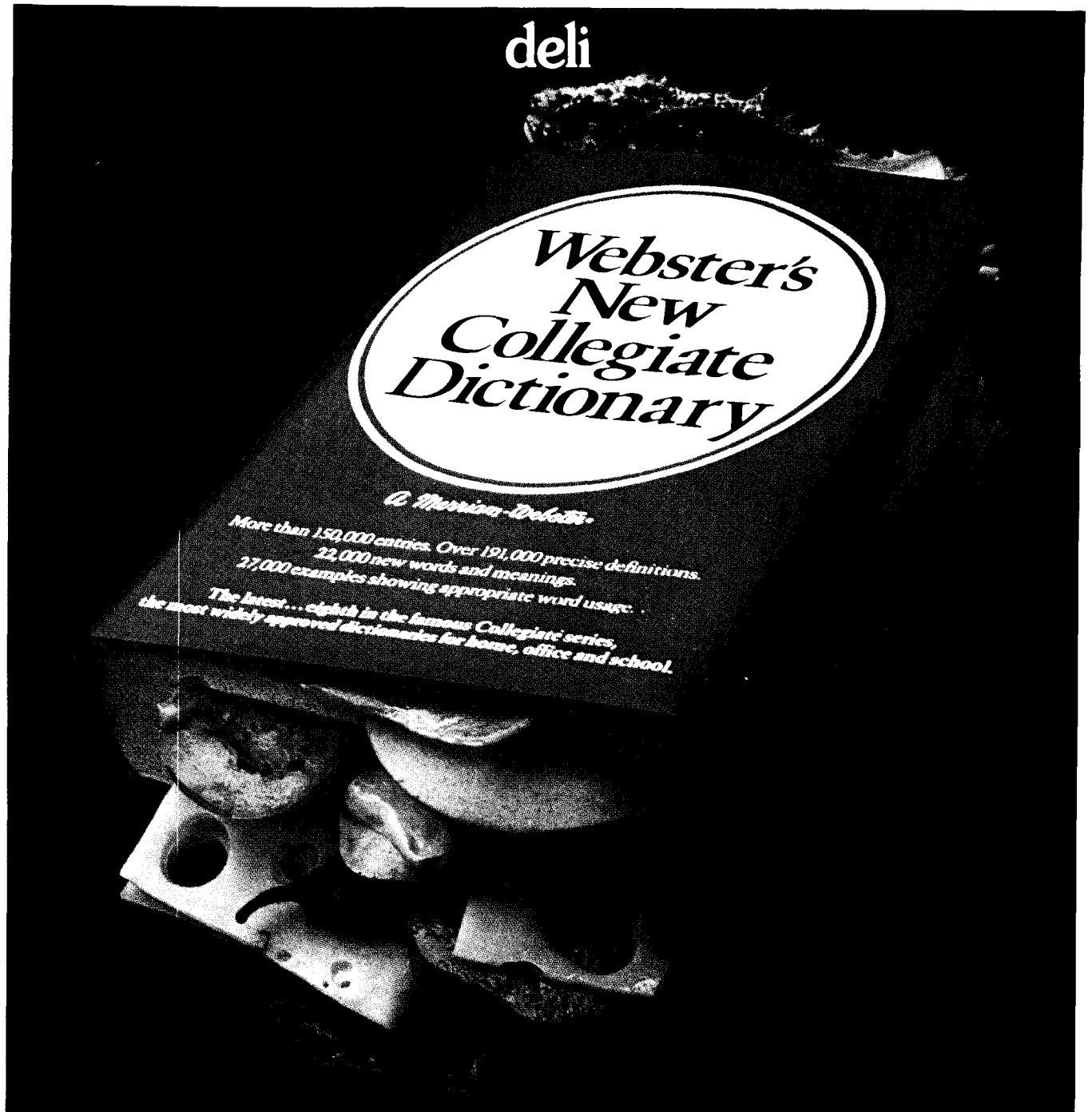
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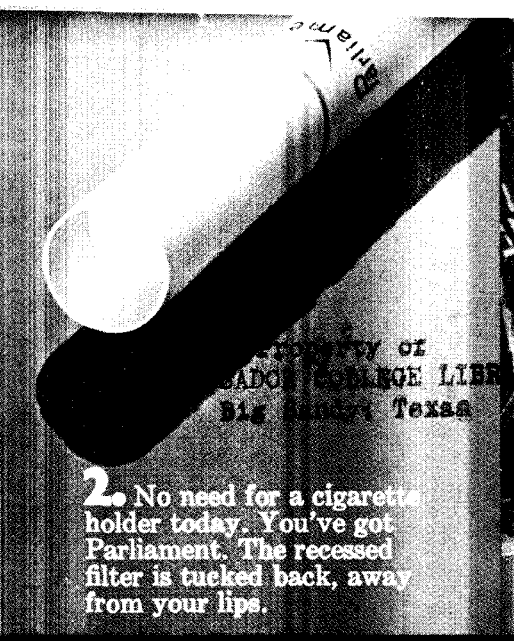

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